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THE HISTORY OF FICTION.





*John Dunlop*  
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# HISTORY OF FICTION:

BEING

A CRITICAL ACCOUNT

OF THE MOST CELEBRATED

PROSE WORKS OF FICTION,

FROM THE EARLIEST GREEK ROMANCES TO THE NOVELS OF THE  
PRESENT DAY.

BY JOHN DUNLOP.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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# HISTORY OF FICTION.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### CONTINUED.

“THE Athenians,” (says Thucydides in his celebrated description of the Pestilence,) “seeing the strange mutability of outward condition; the rich untimely cut off, and their wealth pouring suddenly on the indigent, thought it prudent to catch hold of speedy enjoyments and quick gusts of pleasure, persuaded that their bodies and their wealth might be their own merely for the day. No one continued resolute enough to form any honest or generous design, when so uncertain whether he should live to effect it. Whatever he knew could improve the pleasure or satisfaction of the present moment, *that* he determined to be honour and interest. Reverence of the gods, or laws of society, laid no restraint upon them; and as the heaviest of judgments to which man could be doomed, was already hanging over their heads, they snatched the interval of life for pleasure before it fell.”—(Smith’s Thucydides, vol. ii.)

The gaiety therefore of the characters introduced by Boccaccio in his Decameron, so far from being a defect in his plan, evinces his knowledge of human nature. However, it must be admitted, that the action of the Decameron is faulty, from being in a great measure indefinite. It is not limited by its own nature, as by the close of a pilgrimage or voyage, but is terminated at the will of the

author ; and the most prominent reason for the return of the company to Florence is, that the budget of tales is exhausted.—The characters, too, resemble each other, and have no peculiar shades of disposition, except Dioneo (by whom Boccaccio is said to represent himself,) and Philostrato ; of whom the former is of a comical, and the latter of a melancholy frame of mind. It was thus impossible to assign characteristic stories to the whole *dramatis personæ*, and though there be two persons whose dispositions have been contrasted, some of the most ludicrous stories have been given to Philostrato, and the tale of Griselda, which is generally accounted the most pathetic in the work, is put in the mouth of Dioneo. On this point, however, it may be remarked, that although, as in the case of Chaucer, it may not be difficult to assign one distinctive story to a strongly-marked character, yet it was scarcely in the power of human genius to have invented ten discriminative tales, each of which was to be expressive of the manners and modes of thinking of one individual. Besides, where the characters were so few, this would have given a monotony to the whole work, and the introduction of a greater number would have been inconsistent with the basis of the author's plan.

If the frame in which Boccaccio has set his Decameron be compared with that in which the Canterbury Tales have been enclosed by Chaucer, who certainly imitated the Italian novelist, it will be found that the time chosen by Boccaccio is infinitely preferable to that adopted by the English poet. The pilgrims of the latter relate their stories on a journey, though they are on horseback, and are twenty-nine in number ; and it was intended, had the author completed his plan, that this rabble should have told the remainder of their tales in an abominable tavern at Canterbury. On the other hand, the Florentine assembly discourse in tranquillity and retirement, surrounded by all the delights of rural scenery, and all the magnificence of architecture. But then the frame of Chaucer afforded a much greater opportunity of displaying a variety of striking and dramatic characters, and thence of introducing characteristic tales. His assemblage is mixed and fortuitous, and his travellers are distinguished from each

other both in person and character. Even his serious pilgrims are marked by their several sorts of gravity, and the ribaldry of his low characters is different. "I see," says Dryden, "every one of the pilgrims in the Canterbury Tales as distinctly as if I had supped with them." All the company in the Decameron, on the other hand, are fine ladies and gentlemen\* of Florence, who retire to enjoy the sweets of select society, and who would scarcely have tolerated the intrusion of such figures as the Miller or the Sompnour.

Having said this much of the general features, and introduction of the Decameron, we shall now direct our attention to the tales of which it is composed; the merit of their incidents; the sources from which they have originated, and their influence on the literature of subsequent ages. These tales have been variously classified by different critics. The most complete division of them has been made by Jason de Nares in his *Poetica*, (par. 3.) "Si dimostra dalla distinzione del Decamerone che l'autore le divide tacitamente nel proemio in *Novelle*, come son quelle di Calandrino; in *Parabole*, come è quella di Mitridanes, e di Milesio, e di Giosepho; in *Istorie* come la Marchese di Saluzzo e Griselda; e in *Favole* come Guglielmo Rossiglione, Conte Anguersa, e Minghino, e infinite altre; intendendo per favola, nel modo che Aristotile nella sua poetica, argomenti e azione, o tragiche eroiche o comiche." This classification is extremely vague and fanciful, nor would it be easy to fix on one more satisfactory and defined. The only division to which the Decameron can properly be subjected, is the artificial one contrived by the author. In eight of the ten days into which it is distributed, a particular subject is assigned to the relaters, as stories of comical or melancholy vicissitudes of life, splendid examples of generosity, &c. Dioneo, however, is exempted from this restriction, and is allowed to indulge in whatever topic he chooses. His story is always the last, and generally the most licentious, of the day.

This limitation of subject does not commence in the first day of the Decameron, during which each of the company relates whatever is most agreeable to him, and

Pamphilus, by command of the queen, commences the entertainment.

DAY I. 1. Musciatto Franzesi, a wealthy French merchant, when about to accompany the brother of his king to Tuscany, intrusted Ciappelletto, a notary from Prato, who had frequented his house in Paris, with the charge of collecting, in his absence, some debts that were due to him. To this choice he was led by the malevolent disposition and profligate character of Ciappelletto, which he thought would render him fit to deal with his debtors, who, for the most part, were persons of indifferent credit and bad faith. Ciappelletto, in the course of exacting the sums that were owing to his employer, proceeded to Burgundy, and during his stay in that province, he lodged with two brothers, who were usurers. Persons of this description are common characters in the *Fabliaux* and Italian novels: they came to France from Italy, and established themselves chiefly at Nismes and Montpellier, and received the name of Lombards. They lent on pledge at twenty per cent., and if the loan was not repaid at the end of six months the pledge was forfeited. While residing in the house of the usurers, Ciappelletto is suddenly taken ill. During his sickness he one day overhears his hosts deliberate on turning him out, lest, being unable to obtain absolution, on account of the multitude and enormity of his crimes, his body should be refused church sepulture, and their house be, in consequence, assaulted and plundered;—compliments which it seems the mob were predisposed to pay them. Ciappelletto desires them to send for a priest, and give themselves no farther uneasiness, as he will make a satisfactory confession. The holy man having arrived, inquires, among other things, if he had ever sinned in gluttony. His penitent, with many groans, answers that after long fasts he had often eat bread and water with too much relish and pleasing appetite, especially when he had previously suffered great fatigue in prayer or in pilgrimage. The priest again asks if he had ever been transported with anger? to which Ciappelletto replies, that he had often felt emotions of resentment when he heard young men swear, or saw them haunt taverns, follow vanities, and affect the follies of the world. Similar answers



are received by the confessor to all the questions he puts to his penitent, who, when now about to receive absolution, spontaneously acknowledges, with many groans and other testimonies of repentance, that he had once in his life spit in the house of God, and had on one occasion desired his maid to sweep his house on a holiday. All this passes to the great amusement of the usurers, who were posted behind a partition. The friar, astonished at the sanctity of the penitent, gives him immediate absolution and benediction. On the death of Ciappelletto, which happened soon after, his confessor having called a chapter, informs his brethren of his holy life. The brotherhood watch that night in the place where the corpse lay, and next morning, dressed in their hoods and surplices, attend the body, with much solemnity, to the chapel of their monastery, where a funeral oration is pronounced over the remains, in which the preacher expatiates on the chastity and fastings of the deceased. Such is the effect of this discourse on the audience, that when the service is ended the funeral garments are rent in pieces, as precious relics : and so great was the reputation of this wretch for sanctity, that after the interment all the neighbourhood long paid their devotions at his sepulchre, and miracles were believed to be wrought at the shrine of Saint Ciappelletto.

This tale seems intended as a satire on the Romish church, for having canonized such a number of worthless persons. It is but an indifferent commencement to the work of Boccaccio, yet there is something amusing in the deep affliction Ciappelletto expresses for trifling transgressions, when we have just read the long list of enormities with which the narrative begins.

The story of Ciappelletto is one of the tales of the Decameron supposed by Domenico Manni to be founded on fact ; but of this he has adduced no proof, except that in the year 1300, a person of the name of Muccatto did, in fact, as mentioned in the tale, reside with a brother of the King of France.

2. Giannotto, a mercer in Paris, had an intimate friend called Abraam, of the Jewish persuasion, whom he attempted to convert to Christianity. After much solicitation and argument, Abraam promised to change his religion,

if on going to Rome he should find, from the morals and behaviour of the clergy, that the faith of his friend was preferable to his own. The intention was opposed by Giannotto, who dreaded the consequence of the Jew beholding the depraved conduct of the leaders of the church. His resolution, however, was not to be shaken, and, on arriving at Rome, he found the pope, cardinals, and prelates immersed in gluttony, drunkenness, and every detestable vice. On returning to Paris, he declared to Giannotto his determination to be baptized, being convinced that that religion must be true, and supported by the Holy Spirit, which had flourished and spread over the earth, in spite of the enormities of its ministers.

This story is related as having really happened by Benvenuto da Imola, in his commentary on Dante, which was written in 1376, but none of which was ever printed, except a few passages quoted by Muratori in his Italian antiquities *medii ævi*.

On account of the severe censures contained against the church in this and the preceding tale, they both received considerable corrections by order of the council of Trent.

3. The Sultan Saladin wishing to borrow a large sum from a rich but niggardly Jew of Alexandria, called him into his presence. Saladin was aware he would not lend the money willingly, and he was not disposed to force a compliance: he therefore resolved to ensnare him by asking whether he judged the Mahometan, Christian, or Jewish faith, to be the true one. In answer to this the Jew related the story of a man who had a ring, which in his family had always carried the inheritance along with it to whomsoever it was bequeathed. The possessor having three sons, and being importuned by each to bestow it on him, secretly ordered two rings to be made, precisely similar to the first, and privately gave one of the three to each of his children. At his death it was impossible to ascertain who was the heir. "Neither," says the Jew, "can it be discovered which is the true religion of the three faiths given by the Father to his three people. Each believes itself the heir of God, and obeys his commandments, but which is the pure law is hitherto uncertain."

The sultan was so pleased with the ingenuity of the Jew, that he frankly confessed the snare he had laid, received him into great favour, and was accommodated with the money he wanted.

Most of these stories, which seem to contain a sneer against the Christian religion, came from the Jews and Arabians who had settled in Spain. The novel of Boccaccio probably originated in some Rabbinical tradition. In the *Schebet Judah*, a Hebrew work, translated into Latin by Gentius, but originally written by the Jew Salomo Ben Virga, and containing the history of his nation from the destruction of the Temple to his own time, a conversation which passed between Peter the Elder, King of Spain, and the Jew Ephraim Sanchus, is recorded in that part of the work which treats of the persecutions which the Jews suffered in Spain. Peter the Elder, in order to entrap Ephraim, asked him whether the Jewish or Christian religion was the true one. The Jew requested three days to consider, and at the end of that period he told the king "that one of his neighbours, who had lately gone abroad, left each of his sons a precious jewel, and that being called in to decide which was the most valuable, he had advised the decision to be deferred till the return of their father. In like manner," continued the Jew, "you ask whether the gem received by Jacob or Esau be most precious, but I recommend that the judgment should be referred to our father who is in Heaven." I believe the *Schebet Judah* was not written till near a century after the appearance of the *Decameron*, but the stories related in it had been long current among the Jewish Rabbins. The author of the *Gesta Romanorum* probably derived from them the story of the three rings, which forms the 89th chapter of that romantic compilation. From the *Gesta Romanorum* it passed to the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, of which the 72d tale is probably the immediate original of the story in the *Decameron*.

We are told in the *Menagiana*, that some persons believed that Boccaccio's story of the rings gave rise to the report concerning the existence of the book *De Tribus Impostoribus*, about which there has been so much controversy. Mad. de Staël says, in her "Germany," that

Boccaccio's novel formed the foundation of the plot of *Nathan the Wise*, which is the masterpiece of Lessing, the great founder of the German drama.

4. A young monk, belonging to a monastery in the neighbourhood of Florence, prevails on a peasant girl, whom he meets on his walks, to accommodate him to his cell. While there he is overheard by the abbot, who approaches the door to listen with more advantage. The monk, hearing the sound of feet, peeps through a crevice in the wall, and perceives his superior at the entrance. In order to save himself from chastisement, he resolves to lead the abbot into temptation. Pretending that he was going abroad, he leaves with him, as was customary, the keys of the cell. It is soon unlocked by the abbot, and the monk, who instead of going out, had concealed himself in the dormitory, is supplied with ample materials for recrimination. I am surprised that this story has not been versified by Fontaine, as it is precisely in the style of those he delighted to imitate.

Of this day the six remaining tales consist merely in sayings and reproofs, some of which are represented as having had the most wonderful effects. Nothing can be more ridiculous than feigning that a character should be totally changed, that the avaricious should become liberal, as in the eighth, or the indolent active, as in the ninth novel, by means of a repartee, which would not be tolerated in the most ordinary jest-book.

The evening of the first day was passed in singing and dancing, and a new queen, or mistress of ceremonies, was appointed for the succeeding one.

DAY II. contains stories of those who, after experiencing a variety of troubles, at length meet with success, contrary to all hope and expectation.\*

The merit of the first story depends entirely on the mode of relating it; and however comical and lively in the original, would appear insipid in an abridged translation.

2. Rinaldo d'Asti, on his way from Ferrara to Verona, inadvertently joined some persons, whom he mistook for

\* *Di chi da diversi così infestato sia oltre alla speranza riuscito a liete fine.*

merchants, but who were in reality highwaymen. As the conversation happened to turn upon prayer, Rinaldo mentioned that when going on a journey he always repeated the paternoster of St. Julian, by which means he had invariably obtained good accommodation at night. The robbers said they had never repeated the paternoster, but that it would be seen which had the best lodging that evening. Having come to a retired place, they stripped their fellow-traveller, took what money he had, and left him naked at the side of the road, with many banters concerning St. Julian. Rinaldo, having recovered, arrives late at night at the gates of the Castel Guglielmo, a fortified town. A widow, who was now the mistress of Azzo, Marquis of Ferrara, possessed a house near the ramparts. She had been sitting up expecting her lover, for whom she had prepared the bath, and provided an elegant repast : but as she had just received intelligence that he could not come, she calls in Rinaldo, whom she hears at the porch. He is hospitably entertained by her at supper, and, for that night, makes up to his hostess for the absence of the marquis. The robbers, on the other hand, are apprehended and thrown into prison that very evening, and executed on the following morning.

St. Julian was eminent for providing his votaries with good lodging : in the English title of his legend he is called the *gode Herbejour* ; and Chaucer, in his *Canterbury Tales*, bestows on the Frankelein, on account of his luxurious hospitality, the title of Seint Julian. When the child Anceaume, in the romance of Milles and Amys, is carried on shore by the swan, and hospitably received by the woodman, it is said, “qu’ il avoit trouvé *Sainct Julien* a son commandement, sans dire paternostre.” This saint was originally a knight, and, as was prophesied to him by a stag, he had the singular hap to kill his father and mother by mistake. As an atonement for his carelessness, he afterwards founded a sumptuous hospital for the accommodation of travellers who, in return for their entertainment, were required to repeat paternosters for the souls of his unfortunate parents. The story of St. Julian is related in chapter eighteen of the *Gesta Romanorum*, and in the *Legenda Aurea*. It is this novel of Boccaccio that has given



rise to *L'oraison de St. Julien of Fontaine*, and *Le Talisman*, a comedy, by La Motte. There is also some resemblance between it and part of the old English comedy, *The Widow*, which was produced by the united labours of Ben Jonson, Fletcher, and Middleton. In that play, Ansaldo, after being robbed and stripped of his clothes, is received in the house of Philippa, to whom he was a stranger, but who had prepared a banquet, and was sitting up in expectation of the arrival of her lover Francisco. (See Dodsley's Collection, vol. 12.)

5. Andreuccio, a horse-dealer at Perugia, hearing that there were good bargains to be had at Naples, sets out for that city. His purse, which he ostentatiously displays in the Neapolitan market, is coveted by a Sicilian damsel, who, having informed herself concerning the family of Andreuccio, sends for him in the evening to her house, which is described as very elegant. The furniture is costly, the apartments are perfumed with roses and orange flowers, and a sumptuous entertainment is prepared. From this, and another tale of Boccaccio, and more particularly from the 12th novel of the Fortini, it would appear that persons of this description lived, at that period, in a very splendid style in the south of Italy. The courtesan having persuaded Andreuccio, by an artful story, that she is a sister whom he had lost, he agrees to remain that night at her lodgings. After he had thrown off his clothes, he falls, by means of a trap-board, which was prepared by her contrivance, into the inmost recess of a place seldom resorted to from choice, on which his sister takes possession of his purse and garments. Being at length extricated from his uncomfortable situation by assistance of some of the neighbours, he judiciously proceeds towards the sea-shore; but on his way he meets with certain persons who were proceeding to violate the sepulchre of an Archbishop of Naples, who had been interred that day, with many ornaments, particularly a valuable ring, on the body. Andreuccio having imparted to them his story, they promise to share with him their expected booty, as a compensation for the loss he had sustained. When the tomb is at length broken into, Andreuccio is deputed to strip the corse. He takes possession of the ring for himself, and hands to his com-

rades the other ornaments, as the pastoral staff and mitre : but in order that they may not be obliged to share these with him, they shut him up in the vault. From this situation he is delivered by some one breaking into the sepulchre on a similar speculation with that in which he had himself engaged, and returns to his own country reimbursed for all his losses by the valuable ring. The first part of this story has been imitated in many tales and romances, particularly in *Gil Blas*, where a deceit, similar to that practised by the Sicilian damsel, has been adopted. One of the *Fabliaux* of the *Trouveurs*, entitled *Boivin de Provins* (*Barbazan*, 3. 357), is the origin of all those numerous tales, in which the unwary are cozened by courtesans assuming the character of lost relations.

7. A Sultan of Babylon had a daughter, who was the fairest princess of the East. In recompense of some eminent services rendered by the King of Algarva, she is sent by her father to be espoused by that monarch. A tempest arises during the voyage, and the ship, which conveyed the destined bride, splits on the island of Majorca. The princess is saved by the exertions of Pericone, a nobleman of the country, who had perceived from shore the distress of the vessel. She is hospitably entertained in his castle by her preserver, who soon falls in love with her ; and one night, after a feast, during which he had served her liberally with wine, she bestows on him what had been intended for his majesty of Algarva. The Princess of Babylon passes successively into the possession of the brother of Pericone—the Prince of Morea—the Duke of Athens—Constantius, son of the Emperor of Constantinople—Osbech, King of the Turks—one of Osbech's officers, and a merchant, who was a friend of this officer. Her first lovers obtained her by murdering their predecessors : she afterwards elopes with her admirers, and is at length transferred by legacy or purchase. While residing with her last and least distinguished protector, she meets with Antigonus, an old servant of her father, by whose means she is restored to him. As the princess, by an artful tale, persuades the sultan that she had austere spent the period of her absence in a convent, he scruples not to send her, according to her original destination, to the King of Al-



garva, who does not discover that he is the ninth proprietor—"Bocca Basciata non perde ventura, anzi rinnuova come fa la luna."

This story is taken from the romance of Xenophon Ephesius, and has furnished Fontaine with his tale *La Fiancée du Roi de Garbe*.

8. Does not possess much merit or originality of invention. The revenge taken by a queen of France for a slighted passion, is as old as the story of Bellerophon, though it has been directly imitated by Boccaccio from that of Pier della Broccia and the Lady of Brabant in Dante. Another part of the tale has certainly been taken from the story of Antiochus and Stratonice.

9. In a company of Italian merchants, who happened to meet at Paris, Bernabo of Genoa boasts of the virtue of his wife Zineura. Provoked by the incredulity of Ambrogivolo, one of his companions, who was a contemner of female chastity, he bets five thousand florins against a thousand that Ambrogivolo will not seduce her affections in the space of three months, which he grants him for this purpose. This scandalous wager being concluded, Ambrogivolo departs for Genoa. On his arrival at that place he hears such a report of the virtues of the lady in question, that he despairs of winning her affections, and therefore resolves to have recourse to stratagem, in order to gain the stake. Having bribed one of Zineura's attendants, he is concealed in a chest, and thus carried into the chamber of the lady. At night, while she is asleep, he possesses himself of some trinkets belonging to her, and also becomes acquainted with a particular mark on her left breast. Bernabo, by this deceit, being persuaded of the infidelity of his wife, pays the five thousand florins, and advancing towards Genoa, despatches a servant avowedly to bring his wife to him, but with private instructions to murder her by the way. The servant, however, after he had found a proper place on the road for the execution of his purpose, agrees to spare her, on condition of her flying from the country; but he reports to his master that he had fulfilled his orders. In the disguise of a mariner Zineura embarks in a merchant ship for Alexandria, where after some time, she enters into the service of

the soldan. She gains the confidence of her master in a remarkable degree, who not suspecting her sex, sends her as captain of the guard which was appointed for the protection of the merchants at the fair of Acre. Here, among other toys, she sees the ornaments which had been stolen from her chamber, in possession of Ambrogivolo, who had come there to dispose of a stock of goods, and who relates to her, in confidence, the manner in which the trinkets had been obtained. The fair being over, she persuaded him to accompany her to Alexandria. She also sends to Italy, and induces her husband, Bernabo, to come to settle in the same place. Then, in presence of her husband and the sultan, she makes Ambrogivolo confess his treachery, and discovers herself to be the unfortunate Zineura. The traitor is ordered to be fastened to a stake, and, being smeared with honey, is exposed naked to the gluttony of all the locusts of Egypt, while Bernabo, loaded with presents from the sultan, returns with his wife to Genoa.

This story has been regarded as one of the best in Boccaccio; it seems defective, however, in this, that the resentment we ought to feel at the conduct of the villain, is lost in indignation at the folly and baseness of the husband.

The above is the tale from which Pope imagined that Shakspeare had taken the principal plot of his *Cymbeline*. In the notes to Johnson's Shakspeare this is said to be a mistake, and it is there asserted, that the story is derived from a collection of tales called *Westward for Smelts*, published in 1603, the second story of which is an imitation of Boccaccio's novel. But it seems more probable that the plot of *Cymbeline* was drawn directly from the original, or some translation of it, as the circumstances in the drama bear a much stronger resemblance to the Italian novel than to the English imitation. Thus Shakspeare's Jachimo, who is the Ambrogivolo of the *Decameron*, hides himself in a chest, but the villain in *Westward for Smelts* conceals himself below the lady's bed; nor does he impress on his memory the appearance of the chamber and the pictures, as Ambrogivolo and Jachimo do, in order to give a stronger air of probability to their false relation.

Lastly, in *Cymbeline* and the *Decameron* the imposition is aided by a circumstance that does not at all occur in *Westward for Smelts*. Both *Ambrogivolo* and *Jachimo* report to the husband that they have discovered a certain mark on the breast of the lady. "Ma niuno segnale," says the former, "da potere rapportare le vide, fuori che uno che ella n' havea sotto la sinistra poppa ; cio era un neo, dintorno alquale erano alquanti peluzzi biondi come oro ;" and *Jachimo*, when he has emerged from the trunk, finds, in the course of his examination,

On her left breast  
A mole cinque spotted, like the crimson drops  
I' the bottom of a cowslip.—*Act II. Scene II.*

And again, when addressing *Posthumus*,

If you seek  
For further satisfying, under her breast  
(Worthy the pressing) lies a mole, &c.

The incidents of the novel have been very closely adhered to by *Shakspeare*, but, as has been remarked by an acute and elegant critic, the scenes and characters have been most injudiciously altered, and the manners of a tradesman's wife, and two intoxicated Italian merchants, have been bestowed on a great princess, a British hero, and a noble Roman. Those slight alterations that have been made do not seem to be improvements. In the *Decameron* the villain effects every thing by stratagem and bribery, but *Jachimo* is recommended by *Posthumus* to the princess. This loads the husband with additional infamy ; and, besides, it is not very probable that *Imogen*, who was strictly watched, should have been able to give audience to a stranger who came from the residence of her banished lord. In *Boccaccio*, *Zineura* prevails on the servant, by intercession, to allow her to escape, but this had been resolved on by the confidant of *Posthumus* before he conveyed *Imogen* from her father's palace. This predetermined disobedience of the orders of his master gives rise to the very pertinent question of *Imogen*, to which no satisfactory answer is returned,

Wherefore then  
 Didst undertake it? Why hast thou abused  
 So many miles with a pretence? This place?  
 Mine action, and thine own? *our horses' labour?*

After Imogen's life is spared, Shakspeare entirely quits the novel, and the remaining part of the drama, perhaps, does as little honour to his invention as the preceding scenes to his judgment. "To remark," says Johnson, "the folly of the fiction, the absurdity of the conduct, the confusion of the manners of different times, and the impossibility of the events in any system of life, were to waste criticism upon unresisting imbecility, upon faults too evident for detection, and too gross for aggravation."

10. Is Fontaine's Calendrier des Viellards. The concluding incident corresponds with one in the story D'un Tailleur et de sa Femme, in the Contes Turcs.

On the two following days, which were Friday and Saturday, no tales are related, as the first was revered on account of our Saviour's passion, and the second kept as a fast in honour of the Holy Virgin. The tales are therefore suspended till Sunday, and it is resolved that the company should remove to another palace in the neighbourhood, where suitable preparations had been made for their reception.

DAY III. commences with a description of the new abode to which the party had betaken themselves. It was a sumptuous palace, seated on an eminence which rose in the middle of a plain. Here they found the spacious halls and ornamented chambers supplied with all things that could administer to delight. Below they noted the pleasant court, the cellars stored with the choicest wines, and the cool abundant springs of water which every where flowed. Thence they went to repose in a fair gallery which overlooked the court, and was decked with all the flowers and shrubs of the season. They next opened a garden which communicated with the palace. Around and through the midst of this paradise there were spacious walks, environed with vines, which promised a plenteous vintage, and, being then in blossom, spread so delicious an odour, that, joined with the other flowers then blowing in

the garden, the fragrance rivalled the fresh spiceries of the East. The sides of the alleys were closed with jessamine and roses, forming an odoriferous shade that excluded not only the rays of the morning, but the midday beam. In the middle of this garden was a verdant meadow, spangled with a thousand flowers, and circled with orange trees, whose branches, stored at once with blossoms and fruit, presented a refreshing object, and yielded grateful odour. A fountain of white marble, of wondrous workmanship, adorned the centre of this meadow, and from an image, standing on a column placed in the fountain, a jet of water spouted up, and again fell into the basin with a pleasing murmur. Those waters, which overflowed, were conveyed through the meadow by an unseen channel to irrigate all parts of the garden, and, again uniting, rushed in a full and clear current to the plain. This extraordinary garden was likewise full of all sorts of animals—the deer and goats grazed at their pleasure, or reposed on the velvet grass—the birds vied with each other in the various melody of their notes, and seemed to warble in response or emulation.

One of the sides of this fountain was selected as the most agreeable spot for relating the tales. It had been agreed that the subject should still be the mutability of fortune, and especially of those who had acquired, by their diligence, something greatly wanted, or else recovered what they had lost.\*

1. The gardener of a convent, which consisted of eight nuns and an abbess, gave up his employment; and, on returning to his native village, complained bitterly to Masetto, a young man of his acquaintance, of the small wages he had received, and also of the caprice of his mistresses. Masetto, so far from being discouraged by this account, resolves to obtain the situation. That he might not be rejected on account of his youth and good person, he feigns that he is dumb, and is readily engaged by the steward of the convent. For some time he cultivates the garden in a manner most consolatory to the eight nuns, and at length

\* Di chi alcuna cosa molto da lui desiderata con industria acquisasse, o la perduta ricoverasse.



to the abbess herself; but one day, to their utter astonishment, he breaks silence, and complains of the *extra labour* imposed on him. A compromise, however, is made, and a partial remission of his multifarious duties acceded to on the part of the nuns. On the death of the steward, Masetto is chosen in his place; and it is believed in the neighbourhood that his speech had been restored by the prayers of the sisters to the tutelar saint to whose honour the monastery was erected.

This story is taken from the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, but Boccaccio has substituted an abbess and her nuns for a countess and her *camerarie*; thus, to the great scandal of Vannozzi, attributing to sacred characters what his predecessor had only ascribed to the profane.—“Attribuendo a persone sacre, il Boccaccio, quella colpa che dal suo anteriore fu ascritta a persone profane.”—(*Miscel. let.* vol. i. p. 580.) The story in the *Decameron* is the *Mazet de Lamporechio* of Fontaine.

2. An equerry of Queen Teudelinga, the consort of Agiluf, King of the Lombards, falls in love with his mistress. Aware that he had nothing to hope from an open declaration of love, he resolves to personate the king, and thus gain access to the apartment of her majesty. King Agiluf resorted only during a certain part of the night to the chamber of the queen. The amorous groom procures a mantle similar to that in which Agiluf wrapt himself on these occasions; takes a torch and rod in his hand, as was his majesty's custom, and being farther aided by a strong personal resemblance, is readily admitted into the queen's apartment, where he represents his master. He had no sooner stolen back to his own bed, than he is succeeded by the king, who discovers what had happened, from his wife expressing her admiration at such a speedy return. His majesty instantly proceeds to the gallery where all his household slept, with the view of discovering the person who had usurped his place, from the palpitation of his heart. Fear and agitation betray the offender, and his master, that he might distinguish him in the morning, cuts off a lock of his hair above the ear. The groom, who knew the intent of this, escapes punishment by clip-

ping, as soon as the king had departed, a corresponding lock from the heads of all his companions.

In the 40th chapter of the *Gesta Romanorum*, said to be from Macrobius, a wife's infidelity is discovered by feeling her pulse in conversation; but a story much nearer to that of Boccaccio occurs in Hebers' French metrical romance of the Seven Sages, though, I believe, it is not in the original *Syntipas*. The tale, however, has been taken immediately from the 98th of the *Cento Novelle Antiche*; and it has been imitated in turn in the *Muletier of Fontaine*. Giannone, in his *History of Naples*, has censured, not without some reason, the impertinence of Boccaccio in applying this story, without right, truth, or pretence, to the pious Queen Theudelinda:—"Principessa e per le eccelse doti del suo animo, e per la sua rada pieta dignissima di lode, e da annoverarsi fra le donne piu illustri del mondo, la quale non meritava esser posta in novella da Giovanni Boccaccio, nel suo *Decamerone*." (*Dell' Istoria civile di Napoli*, lib. 4. c. 5.)

3. A beautiful woman, who was the wife of a clothier in Florence, fell in love with a gentleman of the same city. In order to acquaint him with her passion, she sent for a friar who frequented his house, and, under pretence of confession, complained that this gentleman besieges her dwelling, lies in wait for her in the street, or ogles her from the opposite window, and concluded with begging the confessor to give him a rebuke. Next day the friar reprimanded his friend, who being quick of apprehension, profited by the hint, and made love to the clothier's wife in the manner pointed out in her counterfeit complaint, but had no opportunity to speak with her. The lady to encourage him still farther, now presented him, by means of the priest, with a purse and girdle, which, she says, he had the audacity to send, but which her conscience will not allow her to keep. Lastly she complained to her confessor, that her husband having gone to Genoa, his friend had entered the garden, and attempted to break in at the window, by ascending one of the trees. He was, as usual, rebuked by the priest, and having now fully learned his love-lesson, he climbed one of the trees in the garden, and thus entered the casement, which was open to receive him.



This story is related in Henry Stephens' Introduction to the Apology of Herodotus. It is told of a lady of Orleans, who, in like manner, employed the intervention of her confessor to lure to her arms a scholar of whom she was enamoured. The tale of Boccaccio has suggested to Moliere his play *L'Ecole des Maris*, where Isabella enters into a correspondence, and at length effects a marriage, with her lover, by complaining to her guardian Saganarelle in the same manner as the clothier's wife to her confessor. Otway's comedy of the *Soldier's Fortune*, in which Lady Dunce employs her husband to deliver the ring and letter to her admirer Captain Belguard, also derives its origin from the above tale in the Decameron.

4. Is a very insipid story.

5. Which is the *Magnifique of Fontaine*, has given rise to a drama by La Motte, and seems also to have suggested a scene in Ben Jonson's comedy, *The Devil is an Ass*, where Wittipol makes a present of a cloak to a husband for leave to pay his addresses to the wife for a quarter of an hour.

6. Richard Minutolo, a young man of rank and fortune in Naples, falls in love with Catella, the most beautiful woman in that city. Knowing her to be jealous of her husband, he pretends that he had discovered an intrigue between his own wife and her spouse, advising her, if she wished to ascertain his guilt, to repair next night to a bath where they had agreed to meet, and there personate the lady with whom her husband had the assignation. Having resolved to follow this counsel, Catella is received, by Minutolo's contrivance, in a darkened apartment, where, after she had obtained full conviction of her husband's infidelity, she loads him with reproaches, but is much disconcerted, when expecting his apology, to receive amorous excuses from Minutolo.

I do not think this story occurs either in the selection of *Fabliaux* published by Barbazan or Le Grand, but I have little doubt that it exists among those which have not been brought to light. The incident has been a favourite one with subsequent novelists. For example, it corresponds with one of the tales of Sacchetti, and with the fourth of

the Fourth Decade of Cinthio. It has also been versified by Fontaine, in his *Richard Minutolo*.

7. & 8. Are but indifferent stories. The last is the *Feronde ou le Purgatoire* of Fontaine, and has given rise to a comic scene in the *Fatal Marriage* of Southern, in which Fernando is made to believe that he had been dead, buried, and in purgatory,—an incident omitted in this piece, as it has been altered for the stage by Garrick.

9. Giletta di Nerbona was daughter to the physician of the Count of Roussillon, and almost from infancy had fixed her affections on Beltram, the count's son. On the death of his father this young man, as he had been left in charge to the King of France, repaired to the court at Paris, leaving Giletta much afflicted at his departure. Meanwhile it was rumoured that the king had been seized with a dangerous malady, which baffled all the skill of his physicians: Giletta, who was anxious for a pretext to follow her beloved Beltram, set out for Paris, and as she had been instructed in the secrets of her father's art, succeeded in curing the king of the disorder with which he was afflicted. His majesty promised, as a recompense, to marry her to any one on whom she should fix, and she accordingly demanded Beltram of Roussillon as her husband. The count, disliking the marriage to which he was now constrained by the king, immediately after the celebration of the nuptials departed for Tuscany, and his bride returned to Roussillon, where she took the management of the estates of her husband. While in Tuscany, Beltram received a conciliatory message from Giletta, but replied to her emissaries, that he would never treat her as his wife till she had a son by him, and obtained possession of a favourite ring which he constantly wore on his finger. To accomplish these conditions, the fulfilment of which the count considered as impossible, Giletta set out for Florence. On her arrival she learned that the count had fallen in love with a young woman of reduced circumstances in that town. Having made an arrangement with the mother of the girl, the count was given to understand that he would that night be received at the house of his mistress, if he previously sent her his ring as a proof of

affection. This essential token having been obtained, Giletta next represented the young woman of whom the count was enamoured. Beltram soon after returned to his own states, and Giletta, in due time, repaired to Roussillon, where she arrived during a great festival, and having presented her husband with his ring, and two sons to whom she had given birth, was acknowledged as Countess of Roussillon.

In this tale Boccaccio has displayed considerable genius and invention, but it is difficult for the reader to reconcile himself to the character, or approve the feelings, of its heroine. Considering the disparity of rank and fortune, it was, perhaps, indelicate to demand as her husband, a man from whom she had received no declaration nor proof of attachment; but she certainly overstepped all the bounds of female decorum, in pertinaciously insisting on the celebration of a marriage to which he expressed such invincible repugnance. His submission was as mean as her obstinacy was ungenerous, especially as he had pre-determined to renounce and forsake her. After this forced and imperfect union, she thought herself entitled to take possession of the paternal inheritance of her husband, while she knew that he was wandering in a foreign land, and that she was the cause of his exile. The absurd conditions proposed by Beltram, are too evidently contrived for the sake of their completion. When Giletta arrives at Florence, in order to fulfil them, she finds not only that the indifference of the count continues, but that his affections are fixed on another object;—yet neither her pride nor jealousy are alarmed; she ingratiates herself with the family of a rival, and contrives a stratagem, the success of which could have bound Beltram neither in law nor in honour. The triumph and coronet it procured must have been but a poor gratification, nor could she in any way have atoned for her preceding self-debasement, unless by renouncing all claim to her husband, or by conciliating his affections by her beauty or virtues.

Shakspeare has taken this story, with all its imperfections on its head, as the basis of his comedy, *All's Well that Ends Well*. It probably came to the dramatist through the medium of Painter's Giletta of Narbon, pub-

lished in the Palace of Pleasure, 1569, (vol. i. p. 90.) The preliminary circumstances are the same in the English comedy and Italian novel; but in the former the catastrophe has been much protracted. There Helena, who is the Giletta of the novel, after she had obtained one of her credentials, and put herself in the way of procuring the other, spreads, for no purpose, a report of her death; it is in consequence believed, that she had been murdered by her husband, and he is thrown into prison. We have also the useless additions of the newly projected marriage of the count with the daughter of a French nobleman, and the appearance of Diana, his Florentine flame, at court, in order to claim him as her husband. Shakspeare has also added, from his own imagination, his usual characters of a clown and a boasting coward. "The story," says Johnson, "of Bertram and Diana, had been told before of Mariana and Angelor, and to confess the truth, scarcely merited to be heard a second time." This tale of Boccaccio has also formed the subject of one of the oldest Italian comedies, entitled Virginia, which was written by B. Accolti, and printed in 1513. The plot of this drama has been taken, with little variation, from Boccaccio, as appears from the argument prefixed:—

Virginia amando, el Re guarisce, e chiede  
 Di Salerno el gran principe in marito;  
 Qual constrecto a sposarla, è poi partito  
 Par mai tornar fin lei viva si vede:  
 Cereha Virginia scrivendo mercede,  
 Ma el principe da molta ira assalito  
 Li domanda, s' a lei vuol sia redito,  
 Dura condition qual impossibil crede.  
 Pero Virginia, sola e travestita  
 Partendo, ogni impossibil conditione  
 Adempic al fin con prudentia infinita;  
 Onde el Principe, pien d' admiratione,  
 Lei di favore et gratia rivestita  
 Sposa di nuovo con molta effectione.

10. Cannot well be extracted. It is the *Diable en Enfer* of Fontaine.

It will have been remarked, that most of the stories in this Day relate to love intrigues, and are of a comic nature; those of

DAY IV. are for the most part tragic narratives concerning persons whose loves had an unfortunate conclusion.\* This subject was suitable to the temper of Philostrato, the master of ceremonies for this day, who is represented as of a melancholy disposition, and as having been disappointed in love.

From the introduction to the Fourth Day, it would appear that the preceding part of the Decameron had been made public before the author advanced farther, as he takes pains to reply to the censures passed on him by certain persons who had perused his novels. He is particularly anxious to defend himself from the attacks made against him, on account of his frequent and minute details of love adventures, and the pains which he had taken to please the fair sex. In his vindication, he relates a story to show that the admiration of female beauty is implanted in the mind by the hand of nature, and cannot be eradicated by force of education. A Florentine, called Filippo Balducci, having lost his wife, renounced the world, and retired to Mount *Asinaio* with his son, who was only two years of age. Here the boy was brought up in fasting and prayer, saw no human being but his father, and heard of no secular pleasures. When he had reached the age of eighteen, the hermit, in his quest for alms, takes him to Florence, that he might afterwards know the road, should there be occasion to send him. This young man admires the palaces, and all the sights he beheld in that splendid city; but at length perceiving a troop of beautiful women, asks what they were. His father bids him cast down his eyes and not look at them, and, being unwilling to term them by their proper name, added, that they were called goslings (*Papere*.) The youth pays no farther attention to the other ornaments of Florence, but insists that he should be allowed to take a gosling with him to the hermitage.

This story is nearly the same with the 13th of the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, where a king's son having been confined from his infancy for ten years, without seeing the sun, on account of an astrological prediction, at the end

\* Di coloro gli cui amori ebbero infelice fine.



of that period has all the splendid and beautiful objects of the universe placed before him, and among others a number of ladies, who were termed demons in the showman's nomenclature. Being asked which of all chiefly pleased him, he answers, that to him the demons were by far the most agreeable. This tale is in the *Seven Wise Masters of Hebers*; but it may be traced higher than either his metrical production, or the *Cento Novelle Antiche*. In one of the parables of the spiritual romance of *Josaphat and Barlaam*, we are told that a king had an only son, and it was declared by the physicians, as soon as he was born, that if allowed to see the sun or any fire, before he attained the age of twelve, he would become blind. The king commanded an apartment to be hewn within a rock, into which no light could enter. There he shut up the boy totally in the dark, but with proper attendants, for twelve years, at the end of which period he brought him forth from his gloomy chamber, and placed in his view women, gold, precious stones, rich garments, chariots of exquisite workmanship drawn by horses with golden bridles, heaps of purple tapestry, and armed knights on horseback. These were all distinctly pointed out to the youth, but being most pleased with the damsels, he desired to know by what name they were called. An attendant of the king jocosely told him, that they were devils who caught men. Being afterwards brought before his majesty, and asked which of all the fine things he had seen he liked best, he replied,—“Devils who catch men.”

After this introductory tale, Boccaccio commences the regular series of novels of the *Fourth Day*, which are the most mournful, and, I think, the least interesting in his work.

1. Ghismonda, only daughter and heiress of Tancred, Prince of Salerno, becomes enamoured of Guiscardo, one of her father's pages. She reveals her passion, and introduces him to her apartment, through a secret grotto, with which it communicated. During one of the interviews of the lovers, Tancred is accidentally concealed in the chamber of his daughter, and the unfortunate pair depart without suspecting that he had been witness to their crime. Next day the prince upbraids Ghismonda with her conduct.

She returns a spirited answer, declaiming on the power of love, and the superiority of merit over the advantage of birth, in a tone of high and impassioned eloquence. In order to bring her to a more sober way of thinking, Tancred sends her Guiscardo's heart in a golden cup. The princess, aware of the fate he would undergo, had already distilled a juice from poisonous herbs, which she drinks off after having poured it on the heart of her lover.

In this tale, the violence of character attributed to Ghismonda may perhaps appear to be overwrought; but she was precisely in that situation in which the soul acquires a supernatural strength, and the excessive severity of her father naturally turned into the channel of resistance those feelings, which might otherwise have fluctuated in remorse and in shame.\*

No tale of Boccaccio has been so often translated and imitated as the above; it was translated into Latin prose by Leonard Aretine, into Latin elegiac verse by Filippo Beroald, the commentator on Apuleius, and into Italian ottava rima by Annibal Guasco de Alessandrus. It forms the subject of not fewer than five Italian tragedies; one of which, *La Gismonda*, obtained a momentary fame, from being falsely attributed by its real author to Torquato Tasso. An English drama by Robert Wilmot, which is also founded on this story, was acted before Queen Elizabeth at the Inner Temple, in 1568. (Dodsley's *Collection of Old Plays*, vol. ii.) The story appeared in French verse by Jean Fleury, and in the English octave stanza by William Walter, a poet of the reign of Henry VII. In this country it is best known through the *Sigismunda* and *Guiscardo* of Dryden. Mr. Scott has remarked in his late edition of Dryden's works, "that the English poet has grafted one gross fault on his original, by representing the love of *Sigismunda*, as that of temperament, not of affection:" but then the English poet has sanctioned the union of the lovers by a marriage, private indeed and rapid, but which is altogether omitted in the *Decameron*. The old English ballad of *Sir Cauline* and the daughter of

\* Scott's *Dryden*, vol. xi.

the King of Ireland,\* has a strong resemblance to this novel of Boccaccio, in the secret meeting of the lovers, and discovery of their transgression; the catastrophe, however, is entirely different. The fine arts have also added lustre and celebrity to the tale. There is a beautiful painting, attributed to Correggio, in which Sigismunda is represented weeping over the heart of her lover. It was this picture that Hogarth tried to copy and rival, an attempt for which he was severely ridiculed. "The Sigismunda of Hogarth," says Horace Walpole, "is the representation of a maudlin strumpet, just turned out of keeping, with eyes red with rage, tearing off the ornaments her keeper had given her."—See also Churchill's Epistle to Hogarth.

2. The bad character of Alberto da Imola had become too notorious to allow him to remain in his native city. He therefore removed to Venice, the receptacle, as Boccaccio terms it, of all sorts of wickedness, where he became a friar, and soon fell in love with one of his penitents, the wife of a merchant, who was at that time from home. Having discovered her to be a woman of inordinate vanity, he informs her that the angel Gabriel had appeared to him, revealed the passion he had long entertained, and announced his intention of paying her an amatory visit, in any human shape she might command him to assume. Alberto at the same time prevails on her to give a preference to his figure. Accordingly, in the character of Gabriel, Alberto pays many visits to his mistress, but the lady at last boasts of her gallant to an acquaintance, by which means the report reaches her brothers, who resolve to intercept the archangel. At his next interview he is obliged to leave his wings behind him, and to leap over a window into a canal, whence he seeks refuge in a cottage in the neighbourhood. Next day his host, having discovered the story of the angel, informs Alberto, that, at an ensuing festival, each citizen is to take some one dressed up as a bear, or wild man, to St. Mark's Place, as to a hunt, and that when the diversion is over, the conductor may lead away the person he brings to

\* Percy's Relics, vol. i. p. 50.



what quarter he pleases. Alberto, seeing no other mode of escaping unknown from Venice, resolves to attend his host in the disguise of a savage. On the appointed day he is accordingly brought forth in this equipment, but his treacherous friend pulls off his vizard in the most public part of the city, and proclaims him to be the pretended angel. He is in consequence pursued by the hue and cry of the mob, and the intelligence having at last reached the brothers of the deluded lady, he is thrown into prison, where he soon after dies.

The numerous tales founded on that species of seduction, practised by Alberto da Imola, may have originated in the incident related in all the romances concerning Alexander the Great, where Nectanebus predicts to Olympias, that she is destined to have a son by Ammon, and afterwards enjoys the queen under the appearance of that divinity. But they have more probably been derived from the story related by Josephus, (lib. 18. c. 13,) of Mundus, a Roman knight, in the reign of Tiberius, who, having fallen in love with Paulina, wife of Saturninus, bribed a priestess of Isis, to whose worship Paulina was addicted, to inform her that the god Anubis, being enamoured of her charms, had desired her to come to him. In the evening she accordingly proceeded to the temple, where she was met by Mundus, who personated the Egyptian divinity. Next morning she boasted of her interview with Anubis, to all her acquaintance, who suspected some trick of priestcraft; and the deceit having come to the knowledge of Tiberius, he ordered the temple of Isis to be demolished, and her priests to be crucified. Similar deceptions are also common in eastern stories. Thus, in the History of Malek, in the Persian Tales, the adventurer of that name, under the resemblance of Mahomet, seduces the Princess of Gazna. A fraud of the nature employed by Alberto da Imola is frequent in the French novels and romances, as in *L'Amant Salamandre*, and the *Sylph Husband* of Marmontel. It is also said to have been oftener than once practised in France in real life, as appears from the well-known case of Father Girard and Miss Cadiere.

The six following tales are of a melancholy description.

They seem for the most part to have had some foundation in real incidents, which occurred a short while previous to the age of the author, but the details by which they are accompanied, exhibit wonderful knowledge of the heart, and contain many simple touches of natural and picturesque beauty.

9. Two noble gentlemen, who were intimate friends, lived in neighbouring castles in Provence. The name of the one was Gulielmo Rossilione, and of the other, Gulielmo Guardastagno. At length the former suspecting that a criminal intercourse subsisted between his wife and the latter, sent to invite him to his residence, but waylaid and murdered him in a wood, through which the road between the two castles passed. He then opened the breast of his victim, drew out his heart, and carried it home wrapped up in the pennon of his lance. When he alighted from his horse, he gave it to the cook as the heart of a wild boar, commanded him to dress it with his utmost skill, and serve it up to supper. At table the husband pretended want of appetite, and the lady swallowed the whole of the monstrous repast. When not a fragment was left, he informed her that she had feasted on the heart of Guardastagno. The lady, declaring that no other food should ever profane the relics of so noble a knight, threw herself from a casement which was behind her, and was dashed to pieces by the fall.

Some commentators on Boccaccio have believed this tale to be taken from the well-known story of Raoul de Couci, who, while dying of wounds received at the siege of Acre, ordered his heart to be conveyed to his mistress, the Lady of Fayel: but this singular present being intercepted in the way, was dressed by command of the exasperated husband, and presented at table to his wife, who, having incautiously partaken of it, vowed never to receive any other nourishment. This incident is related in a chronicle of the time of Philip Augustus, printed by Fauchet in his *Recueil de l'Origine de la Langue et Poesie Francoise, Ryme et Romans*, 1581, 4to. p. 124. But, as Boccaccio himself informs the reader, that his tale is given according to the relation of the Provenzals (*Secondo de che raccontano i Provenzali*,) it seems more probable that it is taken

from the story of the Provençal poet Cabestan, which is told by Nostradamus in his *Lives of the Troubadours*. Besides, the story of Cabestan possesses a much closer resemblance to the novel of Boccaccio, than the fiction concerning Raoul de Coucy and the Lady of Fayel; indeed, it precisely corresponds with the *Decameron*, except in the names, and in the circumstance that the lady stabs herself instead of leaping from the window. The incident is also told by Vellutello, in his commentary on Petrarch, who mentions Cabestan in the 4th part of his *Triumph of Love*. Crescimbeni, too, in his annotations on Nostradamus, informs us that he has seen a MS. life of Cabestan in the Vatican, which corresponds in every particular, except the names, with the tale of Boccaccio. Rolland, in his *Recherches sur les prerogatives des dames chez les Gaulois*, reports, that Cabestan having gained a cause before the court of love, by the eloquence of his advocate, the lady of Raymond of Rossilione, he was allowed to kiss his beautiful counsel by decree of the court. His insisting on this privilege is assigned by the authors, whom Rolland cites, as the principal cause of the atrocious deed that followed. The story, as related in Nostradamus, occurs in the French tales of Jeanne Flore, where there is this epitaph on the lovers :—

O toi, qui passes sur ces bords,  
Apprends que ce tombeau recele  
Un couple amoureux et fidele,  
Et deux coeurs dans un meme corps.

The novels of this day, it has been seen, principally consist of the relation of violent attachments, which terminated fatally. In those of

DAY V. There are chiefly recounted love adventures, which, after unfortunate vicissitudes, come to a happy conclusion.\*

1. In the island of Cyprus lived a rich man, called Aristippus, to whom fortune had been in every respect favourable, except that one of his sons, though handsome

\* Di cio che ad alcuno amante, dopo alcuni fieri o sventurati accidenti, felicemente avvenisse.

in person, was afflicted with the utmost imbecility of mind. His real name was Galeso, but, on account of his stupidity, he was called Cimon, which, in the language of the country, signified beast. The father, despairing of his improvement, sent him to a country seat, to live with slaves and labourers, to the infinite satisfaction of Cimon. After he had remained there for some time, it chanced that one day, while wandering through a thicket, he perceived a beautiful young woman asleep by the side of a fountain: he long gazed in stupid admiration, and when she awakened he conducted her home; but after this he returned not to the farm, but to his father's mansion. Love, in piercing his heart, effected what had been in vain attempted by his instructors; he applied himself assiduously to study, and in the space of four years became a profound philosopher, and an accomplished gentleman. At the end of this period he asked Iphigenia, (for that was the name of the young lady whose beauty had performed such wonders) in marriage from her father, but learned that she had been affianced to Pasimunda, a young man of Rhodes. Cimon waited for the time when she was to sail for that island. He then armed a ship, manned it with some of his companions, and attacked the vessel which conveyed Iphigenia to her intended husband. Having obtained possession of his mistress, he set sail with her for Crete; but a storm having arisen, he was forced into a bay in the island of Rhodes, where his ship was recognised by the sailors of the vessel he had so lately attacked. Cimon and his friends were in consequence cast into prison, where they remained, while preparations were making for the nuptials of Pasimunda with Iphigenia, and also of a brother of Pasimunda with Cassandra, a young lady of Rhodes. Now Lisimachus, the chief magistrate of the island, happened to be enamoured of Cassandra, and resolved to carry her off by force. Having accordingly prepared a vessel, he associated Cimon in his enterprise. These lovers accordingly attacked the house of Pasimunda, during the celebration of the marriage, and having murdered the bridegrooms, they sailed with the brides for the island of Crete. There they remained till the matter was hushed up, when Lisimachus

returned to Rhodes with Cassandra, and Cimon carried Iphigenia to Cyprus.

In this novel, which is one of those that have added most to the reputation of the Decameron, the author's object seems to have been to exhibit an example of the power of the gentler affections, in refining the human mind. Such a picture would have been more pleasing, though perhaps less natural, than the representation actually given of the transition from an idiot to a ruffian: for it cannot be denied, that the expedients by which Cimon gets possession of a woman, who felt for him no reciprocal attachment, are merely rape and murder. It has also been well remarked,\* that the continuation of the narrative bears no reference to the sudden reformation of Cimon, the striking and original incident with which the tale commences. Cimon might have carried off Iphigenia, and all the changes of fortune which afterwards take place might have happened, though his love had commenced in an ordinary manner; nor is there any thing in his character, or mode of conduct, that reminds us he is such a miraculous instance of the power of love. In short, in the progress of the tale, we entirely lose sight of its striking commencement, nor do we receive much compensation by the introduction of the new actor, Lisimachus, with whose passion, disappointment, and final success we feel little sympathy.

It has been supposed that the original idea of Cimon's conversion is to be found in an Idyllium of Theocritus, entitled Βεκολίσκος; but it is hardly possible that the novelists could have seen Theocritus at the date of the composition of the Decameron. Boccaccio himself affirms, that he had read the account in the ancient histories of Cyprus; and Beroaldus, who translated this novel into Latin, also acquaints us that it is taken from the annals of the kingdom of Cyprus,—a fact which that writer might probably have ascertained from his intimacy with Hugo IV., king of that island.

Besides this version by Beroaldus, the above story was translated into stanzas of English verse about the year

\* Scott's Dryden, vol. xi.



1570, and has also been imitated in his Cimon and Iphigenia by Dryden, who has in some degree softened the crimes of Cimon, by representing Iphigenia as attached to him, and disinclined to a marriage with the Rhodian; which is the reverse of the sentiments she feels in the original. This tale has also formed the subject of a celebrated musical entertainment.

3. Though an insipid story in itself, is curious, as presenting us with the rudiments of a modern romance, of the school of Mrs. Radcliffe.

4. Lizio da Valbona, a gentleman of Romagna, had a daughter called Caterina, who, on pretence that she could not sleep in her own apartment, from the sultriness of the weather, insists with her parents on having a bed prepared in a gallery, which communicated with the garden, that she might be refreshed by breathing cool air, and listening to the song of the nightingale. All this was a stratagem, that she might procure an interview with a young man, called Manardi, of whom she was enamoured. Towards morning the lovers fall asleep, and are thus discovered by the father, who comes to inquire if the song of the nightingale had contributed to his daughter's repose. He gives the choice of instant death, or a legal union with Caterina, to Manardi, who prefers the latter alternative.

The characters in this tale are mentioned by Dante in his Purgatory. A Spirit, complaining of the degeneracy of the Italians, exclaims

Ov' é l' Buon Lizio e Arrigo Manardi."—C. 14.

This demonstrates the existence of these persons, whence Manni in his Commentary infers, according to his usual process of reasoning, that the incident related by Boccaccio must have occurred. In fact, however, it is derived from one of the ancient Armorican tales of Marie, entitled *Lai de Laustic*, which, in the Breton language, signified a nightingale. There is a lady, during the warm nights of summer, used to leave her husband's side, and repair to a balcony, where she remained till dawn of day, on pretence of being allured by the sweet voice of the night-

ingale ; but, in reality, to enjoy the society of a lover, who resided in the neighbourhood.

I know of no version or imitation of this tale of Boccaccio, except *Le Rossignol*, usually published in the *Contes et Nouvelles* of Fontaine, and written in his manner, but of which I believe he was not the author.

5. This story is related by Tonducci, in his *History of Faenza*, and it had been formerly told in an old Latin chronicle. The Italian writers think that it would form a fine subject for the plot of a comedy, and it no doubt bears a considerable resemblance to the incidents in the plays of Terence, as also to the *Incognita* of Goldoni.

6. Seems partly an historical tale ; it is uninteresting in itself, but contains an incident which appears to have suggested to Tasso the punishment of Olindo and Sophronia, who are tied back to back to a stake, and are about to be burned in this posture, when rescued by the arrival and intercession of Clorinda. In the *Decameron*, Gianni di Procida being detected in an intrigue with a young lady, of whom he had been formerly enamoured, but who was then the mistress of Frederick, King of Sicily, the criminals are sentenced to be consumed, while tied to a stake, in a similar position with the lovers in the *Jerusalem*. But when they were already bound, and when the faggots were about to be lighted, they were delivered by the unexpected coming of Ruggieri dell Oria, the high admiral, who intercedes for them with the king. The desire, too, expressed by the lover in the *Decameron*, of a change of position, has been beautifully imitated by the Italian poet. Gianni di Procida exclaims, when the sentence is about to be executed,—“ *Io veggio, che io debbo, e tostamente morire ; voglio adunque di gracia, che come io son con questa giovane, con le reni a lei voltato, e ella a me, che noi siamo co ’visi l’uno all’ altro rivolti ; accioche morendo io, vedendo il viso suo, ne possa andar consolato.*”

In like manner Olindo calls out in the crisis of his fate,—

“ *Ed Oh mia morte avventurosa appieno,  
Oh fortunati miei dolci martiri,  
S’ impetrero che giunto seno a seno  
L’ anima mia ne la tua bocca io spiri !*



E venendo tu meco a un tempo meno  
In me fuor mandi gli ultimi sospiri."

*Gerus. Lib. c. 2.*

7. Amerigo de Trapani, who lived in the time of the good King William of Sicily, purchased for his service a number of slaves, out of a Genoese vessel which had just returned from the coast of Armenia. One of these, called Theodore, at that time almost a child, became, as he grew up, a great favourite of Amerigo; was released from a servile condition, and at length admitted to his master's table. Violante, the daughter of Amerigo, falls in love with him, and is soon in a situation which requires retirement. She is accordingly sent by her mother to a country-seat belonging to the family, but without her father's knowledge of the cause. He discovers the truth, however, by going to this villa at a most critical moment, and compels his daughter to reveal the name of the father of the child to which she was giving birth. At his return to the city, Amerigo procures sentence of death to be passed on Theodore, and despatches a confidential assassin to his daughter, with the choice of a dagger or phial of poison. Theodore, on his way to the place of execution, is recognised as his son by an Armenian ambassador, then residing in Sicily, who procures his pardon, on condition that he should espouse the lady whom he had seduced. Her lover then hastens to the country seat, and fortunately arrives before his mistress had been compelled to make choice of dying by the poison or dagger. Such marvellous recognisances as that in the above novel were frequent in old stories. The tale is in itself indifferent, and is chiefly curious, as being the foundation of the plot of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Triumph of Love*, the second and best of their *Four Plays in One*. The drama, however, only commences when the lady is on the verge of her *accouchement*. A rival is also conjured up to the lover Girard, in the person of his brother, and both at length prove to be children of the Duke of Milan.

8. Nastagio, a young man of great wealth in the city of Ravenna, was deeply enamoured of a lady of the family of Traversari, who rejected his proposals of marriage, and

treated him with much harshness and disdain. As he was in danger of consuming his fortune in fruitless attempts to soften her cruelty, he is advised by his friends to travel to some distant country, with a view of extinguishing his passion. After making preparations, as for a long journey, he leaves Ravenna, but proceeds no farther than his country-seat at Chiassi, which was about three miles distant from the city. One day during his residence there, while wandering through a wood, lost in deep meditation, he is surprised by the uncouth spectacle of a lady in total deshabille, flying through the thickets with dreadful screams, pursued by two hounds and a grisly knight, who rode on a black steed, and bore a drawn sword in his hand. Nastagio attempts to oppose this unhandsome procedure, but is warned by the huntsman not to impede the course of divine justice. The knight then reveals to Nastagio, that, in despair at that lady's cruelty whom he was now pursuing, he had slain himself with the sword he held in his hand, and that his mistress dying soon after, she was condemned to be hunted down in this manner every Friday, for a long course of years, by her rejected lover. By this time the visionary victim is overtaken by the mastiffs. She is pierced with the rapier by the knight, her heart is torn out, and is immediately devoured by the dogs. As soon as she is completely dismembered, she starts up as if she had sustained no injury, and again flies before her infernal pursuer. Nastagio resolves to turn this goblin scene to his advantage;—he asks his stubborn mistress and her family to dine with him on the following Friday, and the invitation being accepted, he prepares an entertainment in the grove where he had lately witnessed the supernatural tragedy. Towards the end of the repast the troop of spirits appear, and the avenging knight relates his story to the terrified assembly. The lady, in particular, appalled at this dreadful warning, accepts the hand of her formerly rejected lover.

We are informed in a note, by the persons employed for the correction of the *Decameron*, that this tale is taken, with a variation merely in the names, from a chronicle written by Helinandus, a French monk of the 13th cen-

tury, which comprises a history of the world from the creation to the author's time.

This story, which seems to be the origin of all retributory spectres, was translated in 1569 into English verse, by Christopher Tye, under the title of "A Notable Historye of Nastagio and Traversari, no less pitiefull than pleasaunt." He has chosen the psalm measure which he used in paraphrasing the Acts of the Apostles :—

" He sawe approche with swiftie foot  
The place where he did staye,  
A dame with scattered heares untrussed  
Bereft of her araye,  
Besides all this two mastiffs great," &c.

It is not impossible that such old translations, now obsolete and forgotten, may have suggested to Dryden's notice those stories of Boccaccio which he has chosen. Sigismunda and Guiscard, as well as Cimon and Iphigenia, had appeared in old English rhyme before they received embellishment from his genius. In his Theodore and Honoria he has adorned the above story with all the charms of versification, and converted what he found an idle tale, into a beautiful poem. The supernatural agency, as well as the feelings of those present at Nastagio's entertainment, are managed with wonderful skill, and it seems on the whole the best executed of the three novels which he has selected from the Decameron.

9. Is the Faucon of Fontaine. Of this story it has been remarked, "that as a picture of the habitual workings of some one powerful feeling, where the heart reposes almost entirely on itself, without the violent excitement of opposing duties or untoward circumstances, nothing ever came up to the story of Federico and his Falcon. The perseverance in attachment, the spirit of gallantry and generosity displayed in it, has no parallel in the history of heroic sacrifices. The feeling is so unconscious too and involuntary, is brought out in such small, unlooked-for, and unostentatious circumstances, as to show it to have been woven into the very nature and soul of the author."

10. Part of this tale, which cannot be extracted, is taken

from the 9th book of Apuleius. It also bears a strong resemblance to the 31st and 33d novels of Girolamo Morlini.

The tales in

DAY VI. principally consist of bon mots, repartees, or ready answers, which relieve from some danger or embarrassment;\* thus, for instance, in the

4. Currado, a citizen of Florence, having one day taken a crane with his hawk, sent it to his cook to be dressed for supper. After it had been roasted, the cook yielded to the importunities of one of his sweethearts, and gave her a leg of the crane. His master is greatly incensed at seeing the bird served up in this mutilated form. The cook being sent for, excuses himself by asserting that cranes have only one leg. On hearing this, Currado is still farther exasperated, and commands him to produce a live crane with only one leg, or expect the severest punishment. Next morning the cook, accompanied by his master, sets out in quest of this *rara avis*, trembling all the way with terror, and fancying every thing he sees to be a crane with two legs. At length he is relieved from his anxiety, when, coming to a river, he perceives a number of cranes standing on the brink on one leg, the other being drawn in, as is their custom. "Now, master," says he, "look at these; did not I speak truth?" "Stay a while," replies Currado, and then riding nearer, he cries out, "Shough! Shough!" with all his might, on which they flew away with both legs extended. "What say you now, have they not two legs?" "Yes, yes," answered the cook, "but you did not shout out last night to the crane that was at supper, as you have done to these, or questionless it would have put down its other leg like its fellows."

10. Is the only tale of this day which does not consist in a mere expression. Friar Cipolla, of the order of St. Anthony, was accustomed to go once a-year to Certaldo, to gather contributions. In this he was usually very successful, owing to the wealth and credulity of the people of that district. While there, as usual, in the month of Au-

\* Di chi con alcuno leggiadro motto tentato si riscotesse; o con pronta risposta o avedimento, fuggissi perdita, pericolo, o scorno.

gust, he took an opportunity one Sunday morning, when all the inhabitants were assembled to hear mass, to solicit their attendance on the following day at the church door, to contribute their mite to the poor brethren of St. Anthony. He also informed them he would preach a sermon, and exhibit a most precious relic—a feather of the angel Gabriel, which he had dropped in the chamber of the Virgin, when he came to her at the annunciation in Nazareth. The friar being of a jovial disposition, had two bottle companions in Certaldo, who happened to be present, and resolved to play him some mischief. As he went abroad to dinner that day, they easily got access to his room, where they found a wallet, and in it a casket wrapped up in silk, which contained the feather of a parrot, a bird at that time scarcely known in Italy. They carried off this feather, which was intended to pass for that of the angel, and substituting some coals in its place, left all things apparently as they had found them. Next day an immense multitude being assembled, the friar sent for his wallet: having commenced his sermon, he discoursed at great length on the wonders of the relic he possessed, but when he came to the exhibition, he was somewhat disconcerted at finding the coals in place of the feather; yet, without changing countenance, he shut the casket, and exclaimed, “May the power of God be praised!” Then addressing his audience, he informed them that in his youth he had been sent by his superior into the East. He gave a long account of his travels as far as India, and told how on his return he had visited the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who had shown him innumerable relics: among others, a lock of the hair of the seraph that appeared to St. Francis, a paring of the cherub’s nail, a few of the rays of the blessed star that guided the Magi in the east, a vial filled with the sweat which dropped from St. Michael when he combated with the devil, the jawbone of Lazarus, &c. But of all these relics, he had chiefly admired the feather of the angel Gabriel, and the coals that roasted St. Lawrence, with which the patriarch had in consequence been pleased to present him. These holy gifts had been packed up in caskets resembling each other, and it had been the will of God to bring the one which contained the coals, instead of



that with the feather; but the substitution, he continued, was a fortunate thing for Certaldo, for whoever was marked by these coals with the sign of the cross, would be secure against injury by fire for the rest of the year. The credulous multitude were satisfied with this explanation, and contributed a large sum to be signed with the imaginary relics.

This tale of Boccaccio drew down the censure of the Council of Trent, and is the one which gave greatest umbrage to the church. The author has been defended by his commentators, on the ground that he did not intend to censure the respectable orders of friars, but to expose those wandering mendicants who supported themselves by imposing on the credulity of the people; that he did not mean to ridicule the sacred relics of the church, but those which were believed so in consequence of the fraud and artifice of monks.

In Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* there is a similar satire on ludicrous relics. The Pardonere, who had just arrived from Rome, carried in his wallet, along with other treasures of a like description, part of the sail of St. Peter's ship, and the veil of the Virgin Mary :

“ And with these relikes whanne that he fond  
A poure persone dwelling up on lond,  
Upon a day he gat him more moneie  
Than that the persone gat in monethes tweie.”

A catalogue of relics, rivalling in absurdity those of Chaucer's Pardonere, or Boccaccio's Cipolla, is presented in Sir David Lindsay's *Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*. In the 38th chapter of Stephens's *Apology for Herodotus*, we are told that a priest of Genoa returning from the Levant, boasted that he had brought from Bethlehem the breath of our Saviour in a vial, and from Sinai the horns which Moses wore when he descended from that mountain. If we may believe the *Colloquia Mensalia* of Luther, that great reformer told that the Bishop of Mentz pretended to possess the flames of the bush which Moses beheld burning!

The sixth day concludes with the description of a valley, in which the ladies pass some part of the day. It was of a circular form, encompassed by six hills, on each of

which stood a palace built in the form of a castle. Those sides that sloped to the south, were covered with vines, olives, and every species of fruit-tree : those that looked towards the north, were planted with oaks and ashes. The vale itself was full of cypress trees and laurels, through which no sunbeam could dart on the flower-spangled ground. But what was chiefly delightful, a stream issued through a valley which divided two of the hills, and rushing over a rock, made an agreeable murmur, while the drops that were sprinkled shone to the eye like silver ; it thence flowed in a clear and tranquil channel, till it was at length received into a pebbly basin in the midst of the plain.

DAY VII. Is appropriated to stories of tricks or stratagems, which women from love, or for their own security, have put on their husbands, whether they were detected or not.\*

2. A young woman of Naples brought a gallant to her house one morning, while her husband was out at work. The object of the lover's visit was not accomplished when the husband unexpectedly returned ; he knocked at the door, which he found bolted, and internally commended his wife for her vigilance and sobriety. She, on hearing him at the entrance, conceals the young man in a tub, and running down to meet her husband, upbraids him with his idleness. He answers, that he had forgotten it was the festival of St. Galeone, but that she would not want for bread, as he had disposed of the tub since he went out for five shillings (Gigliate). The wife, with great readiness, says she had just sold it for seven. On hearing these words, the gallant instantly throws himself out of the vat, assumes the character of the purchaser, and agrees to take it at the price mentioned, provided it be first well scoured. The husband gets into the barrel, in order to scrub it, and while he was thus occupied—

Notre couple, ayant reprit courage,  
Reprit aussi le fil de l'entretien.

This tale has been translated by Boccaccio from a story

\* Delle beffe, lequali o per amore, o per salvamento di loro, le donne hanno gia fatte a suoi mariti senza essersene adveduti, o si.



which may be found near the beginning of the ninth book of Apuleius. It is the Cuvier of Fontaine.

3. Is one of a good many novels in the Decameron, in which married women are seduced by monks, who were godfathers to their children (*compare*);—a connexion which in Italy seems to have given access to the bosom of families, and placed familiarity beyond suspicion.

4. A rich man in Arezzo is jealous of his wife. She contrives to make him habitually drunk at night, and while he is thus intoxicated she goes out to a gallant. At length the husband distrusting her motives, in thus encouraging his evil propensity, pretends on one occasion to be drunk when perfectly sober. His wife went abroad according to custom; but when she returns she finds the door locked, and on her husband refusing to open it, throws a stone into a well. The man thinking she had drowned herself, and fearing that he might be accused of the murder, runs to her assistance. Meanwhile she gets into the house, and shuts him out in turn. She loads him with abuse, and a crowd being gathered, he is exposed as a dissipated wretch to all his neighbours, and among others to the relations of his wife. This tale is the origin of the Calandra of the Cardinal Bibbiena, the best comedy that appeared in Italy previous to the time of Goldoni: it also forms the groundwork of one of Dancourt's plays, and probably suggested to Moliere the plot of his celebrated comedy, *George Dandin*. The story, however, had been frequently told before the time of Boccaccio, being one of the *Fabliaux* of the *Trouveurs*, published by Le Grand (vol. iii. p. 143). It appears in the still more ancient tales of Petrus Alphonsus, which have been so frequently mentioned, and in one of the French versions of *Dolopatos*, or the *Seven Wise Masters*. It does not occur, however, in *Syntipas*, the Greek form of that romance, nor in the French version of *Hebers*, but only in that of the anonymous *Trouveur*.

5. A merchant in Ariminio being immoderately jealous of his wife, confines her closely at home in the most grievous restraint. She contrives, nevertheless, to enter into correspondence with a young man, called Philip, who lived in the adjoining building, by means of a chink in the partition between a retired part of her own house and

Philip's chamber. On the day before the Christmas festival, the lady informs the merchant that she means to go on the following morning to church, to confess her sins to a priest. Her husband inquires what sins she has to acknowledge. She replies that she has a great many, but that she would reveal them to no other than a priest. This mystery inflaming the jealousy of the husband, he repairs to the church where his wife intended to confess: having agreed with the chaplain, he puts on the disguise of a friar, and is ready on the following morning to receive the expected penitent. The lady instantly recognises her husband, but, dissembling her knowledge, feigns a story that she is beloved by a priest, who comes to her every night while her husband is asleep, and that he possesses a power which neither locks nor bolts can resist. That evening the husband tells his wife he is going abroad to supper, but lies in wait all night in a ground room, to observe the expected coming of the priest. While thus employed, the lady introduces her lover by the secret way into her chamber. The same thing is repeated during a number of nights; but the husband at length, tired with watching, insists on learning the name of the priest, of whom she is enamoured. His wife then cures him of jealousy, by assuring him that she had discovered his stratagem, and that he was the priest to whom she alluded in her confession.

This story seems to have been suggested by the *Fabliau*, *Du Chevalier qui confessa sa femme*. There a lady being sick shows a most earnest desire to see a confessor. Her husband wondering at this anxiety, disguises himself as a priest, and hears a confession of an intrigue with his nephew, who lived in the house. He immediately turns his relative out of doors, and on her recovery reproaches his wife with her conduct. She replies, laughing, that she had detected his trick, and had taken that mode of at once avenging herself for such injurious suspicions, and of getting rid of his nephew, who was burdensome to the family. It is not easy to understand, from the abridgement of *Le Grand*, whether this explanation was an ingenious device on the part of the lady to conceal her gallantries, or whether she had really acted from the motives she avowed. The modern imitations correspond more closely with the

Decameron than with the original *Fabliau*. In the 78th of the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, entitled *Le Mari Confesseur*, a lady, who is confessed by her husband in the disguise of a priest, acknowledges a criminal intercourse with a squire, a knight, and a priest. On hearing this the husband bursts out into an indignant exclamation. "Were you not," says she, with some presence of mind, "a squire when I married you, were you not afterwards a knight, and are you not now a priest?" This is copied by Fontaine in *Le Mari Confesseur*. In *Bandello*, (Nov. 9. par. 1.) the husband suborns the priest to hear the confession of his wife, and stabs her on its being reported to him, which cuts out the ingenuity and readiness of the wife's reply. "Compare," says *Le Grand*, in a tone of exultation, "this Italian story of assassination with the French *Fabliau*, and see with what truth nations unintentionally paint their manners." *Malespini*, however, though an Italian novelist, has adhered in his 92d tale to the incidents of the *Fabliau*. In the tales of *Doni*, the wife has an intrigue with a page during her husband's absence. Being detected by a neighbouring baron, she bribes him to silence by granting him the same favours; she again permits herself to be discovered by a priest, and purchases secrecy by a similar compliance: she is confessed by her husband on his return, and having inadvertently acknowledged her triple transgression, she gets off by reminding her husband, that though now a baron, he had been formerly the king's page, and was at that moment a priest.

6. The wife of a Florentine gentleman had two lovers. To the one, called *Leonetto*, she was much attached; but the other, *Lambertuccio*, only procured her good-will by the power which he possessed, in consequence of his high rank and influence, of doing her injury. While residing at a country seat, the husband of this lady left her for a few days, and on his departure she sent for *Leonetto* to bear her company. *Lambertuccio* also hearing of the absence of the husband, came to the villa soon after the arrival of her favoured lover. Scarcely had *Leonetto* been concealed, and *Lambertuccio* occupied his place, when the husband unexpectedly knocked at the outer gate. At the earnest entreaty of his mistress, *Lambertuccio* runs down

with a drawn sword in his hand, and rushes out of the house, exclaiming,—“If ever I meet the villain again!”—Leonetto is then brought forth from concealment, and the husband is informed, and believes, that he had sought refuge in his villa from the fury of Lambertuccio, who, having met him on the road, had pursued him with an intention of putting him to death.

The original of this story is a tale in the Greek Syntipas, the most ancient European form of the Seven Wise Masters, but it has been omitted in some of the more modern versions. In Syntipas, a Greek officer having an intrigue with a married woman, sends his slave to announce his intention of paying her a visit. The lady, however, is so much pleased with the messenger, that she receives him in place of his master; and the officer, becoming impatient at the delay, proceeds without farther ceremony to the house of his mistress. On his sudden approach, the lady has just time to conceal the slave, and then to receive her lover with assumed delight. While occupied with him, the husband knocks at the gate. Hearing this the lady places a drawn sword in the hand of her lover, and directs him to rush out, venting loud execrations. Having complied with her injunction, she informs the husband that he had come to the house in a paroxysm of fury, in search of a slave who had sought shelter with her, and whom, from principles of humanity, she had concealed from his resentment. After seeing the officer far off, the husband draws forth the young slave from his concealment, assuring him he need be under no further apprehensions, as his master was already at a great distance. (*Mem. de M. Dacier dans Les Mem. des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, vol. xli.) In the Tales of Petrus Alphonsus there is a similar story of a mother, who puts a sword into the hand of her daughter's gallant, and persuades the husband that he had fled to the house to seek refuge from the pursuit of assassins. There are corresponding stories in *Le Grand's Fables*, (IV. p. 160;) *Bandello*, (N. 11,) and *Parabosco*, (N. 16.) One or other of these tales suggested a part of Beaumont and Fletcher's comedy of *Women Pleased*, (act ii. scene 6,) where Isa-

bella in a similar manner conveys two lovers out of her chamber, when surprised by the coming of her husband.

7. A young man of fortune in France, of the name of Lewis, repaired to Bologna, from a desire to see a lady, called Beatrice, whom he had heard mentioned as the finest woman in the world. He found that her beauty exceeded even his high expectations, and he became so deeply enamoured, that, with the view of being constantly near her person, he engaged himself as an attendant to her husband. In a short while he proved so acceptable to his master, that he was looked on more as a friend than domestic. One day, on which the husband was abroad hawking, Lewis, while playing at chess with his mistress, revealed his passion, acquainted her with his rank in life, and with all he had done for her sake. The lady took the bold step of desiring him to come at midnight to the apartment in which she slept with her husband. Thither Lewis repaired at the appointed hour, quite uncertain by what means the lady intended to gratify his passion. He was accordingly much dismayed when, on approaching the side of the bed where the lady was, she awakened her husband, and informed him that his servant Lewis had made offer to her of his love, and that if he wished to be satisfied of the truth of her assertion, he might dress himself in her clothes, and go to the pine-tree in the garden, where, in order to secure his conviction, she had agreed to meet him. The credulous husband set out on this errand; Lewis remained some time with the lady, and then, at her suggestion, went down to the garden with a cudgel in his hand, which he exercised on the husband, feigning to believe that he is punishing the wife, and reviling her all the while for her infidelity. After this the sufferer returned to bed, and deemed the drubbing he had received amply compensated by the assurance now obtained of the fidelity of his servant and chastity of his spouse.

The incidents in this novel are amusing enough, but it does not appear that there was any necessity for the lovers to have had recourse to such intricate and perilous expedients. This tale has been copied by Ser Giovanni in the 2d of the 3d day of his Pecorone, and has given rise



to that part of an old English comedy of the 17th century, called the *City Nightcap*, by John Davenport, which relates to Francisco's intrigue with Dorothea, the wife of Ludovico. It is the *Mari cocu, battu, et content*, of Fontaine :—

“Messire Bon eut voulu que le zele  
De son Valet n'eut été jusques là,  
Mais le voyant si sage, et si fidele,  
Le bon hommeau des coups se consola.”

8. Sismonda, wife of Ariguccio Berlinghieri, a Florentine merchant, fell on a singular stratagem to obtain interviews with her gallant. She procured a string, one end of which she tied to her great toe, while the other went out at the window and reached the street. The lover used to pull the cord as a signal of his approach, and if the lady let it go to him, it was understood that he might come in, as this expressed that her husband was asleep. Ariguccio observing this string, suspected there was some mystery attached to it, and while his wife was asleep, unloosed it from her toe, and fastened it to his own. It was shortly after tugged by the gallant, on which Ariguccio ran to the entrance, and pursued his rival to a considerable distance. The lady, awakening, conjectured what had happened. She accordingly put out the light, went into another apartment, and bribed one of her waiting-maids to take her place, in order to meet the resentment of her husband, who on his return cut off the hair of the substitute, and disfigured her face with blows. He next went to the house of his wife's brothers, informed them of her conduct, and how he had punished her. They accompanied him home, resolved to take a still more complete vengeance on their guilty sister; but on their arrival they found her sitting at work with perfect composure, neatly apparelled, her face unblemished, and her hair properly ordered. As this differed wholly from the account of her husband, they refused to give credit to the other part of their brother-in-law's story, and reviled him bitterly on account of the enormities of which their sister now introduced a plausible detail.

In the 4th novel of this day, we have seen a woman in-

geniously justify herself in the sight of her relations, and bring her husband into disgrace; but the incident of the substitution and cutting off the hair, is more ancient than the time of Boccaccio, and seems to have been suggested by the *Fabliau of Les Cheveux coupée* (*Le Grand*, v. ii. p. 280), where, however, the intrigue is detected in a different manner from the story in the *Decameron*. A gallant comes to his mistress's chamber, and the husband, mistaking him for a robber, throws him into a tub, and orders his wife to watch till he runs for a light. The wife allows the gallant to escape, and substitutes a calf in his place. At the return of the husband she is turned out of doors. She bribes a servant to lie down by her husband, who, thinking his wife had come back, cut off her hair; when the husband falls asleep, she resumes her place, and substitutes the calf's skin in room of the hair, by which means she persuades him in the morning that the whole had been a dream. This improbable story is perhaps the immediate original of Boccaccio's, but the incidents may be traced as far back as the tales of *Bidpai*, the oldest collection in the world. In one part of the fable of the *Dervise and Robbers*, at least as it appears in the version of *Galland*, a shoemaker's wife being detected in an intrigue, and tied to a pillar, persuades another woman to take her place. The husband rises during night, and cuts off the nose of the substitute. After this catastrophe the wife instantly resumes her position, and addresses a prayer to God to manifest her innocence, by curing her of the wound. The 40th story of the 2d part of *Malespini* is a similar tale with that of *Bidpai*; it also occurs in the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, and one or other of these imitations probably suggested the incident in *Massinger's Guardian*, of *Severino* cutting off *Calipso's* nose, mistaking her in the dark for his wife *Iolante*.

9. *Lidia*, wife of *Nicostrato*, one of the richest inhabitants of *Argos*, became enamoured of an attendant of her husband, named *Pyrrhus*. By the intervention of a female confidant, she disclosed to him her passion, and solicited a return. *Pyrrhus*, suspecting that this message was a stratagem to try his fidelity to his master, demanded, before requiting her affection, that she should kill her husband's



favourite hawk, and send him a tuft of his master's beard, as also one of his grinders, in token of her sincerity. All this the lady promised to perform, and added spontaneously, that she would offer her husband in his own presence the most grievous insult he could receive. The two first articles of her engagement she easily fulfilled. She also obtained a tooth, by instructing her husband's pages to turn aside their heads while serving him, and then persuading him that they did so on account of his bad breath, occasioned by a spoiled tooth, which he readily permitted her to draw. In order to perform the voluntary part of her agreement, she went one day into the garden, accompanied by her husband and Pyrrhus. By her direction the latter climbed a pear-tree, whence, to the great surprise of the former, he exclaimed against the immodesty of his conduct with his wife. The husband ascribes this *deceptio visus* to some magical property in the pear-tree, and, ascending to investigate its nature, he attributes to enchantment the intercourse that takes place between his wife and servant.

All that relates to the pear-tree in this tale corresponds precisely with the 4th lesson in chapter 12th of the collection of oriental stories, known by the name of Bahar-Danush, or Garden of Knowledge.—“The fourth lady having bestowed her attention on the Pilgrim Bramin, despatched him to an orchard, and having gone home, said to her husband, I have heard that in a certain orchard there is a date tree, the fruit of which is of remarkable fine flavour; but what is yet stranger, whoever ascends it sees many wonderful objects. If to-day, going to visit this orchard, we gather dates from this tree, and also see its wonders, it will not be unproductive of amusement. In short, she so worked upon her husband with flattering speeches and caresses, that he went to the orchard, and at the instigation of his wife ascended the tree. At this instant she beckoned to the Bramin, who was previously seated expectantly in a corner of the garden. The husband, from the top of the tree beholding what was not fit to be seen, exclaimed in extreme rage, Ah! thou shameless wretch, what abominable action is this? The wife, making not the least answer, the flames of anger seized the mind

of the man, and he began to descend from the tree; when the Bramin, with activity and speed, having hurried over the fourth section of the Tirrea Bede, went his way. The husband, when he saw no person near, was astonished, and said to himself, Certainly this vision must have been miraculous. From the hesitation of her husband, the artful wife guessed the cause, and impudently began to abuse him. Then instantly tying her vest round her waist, she ascended the tree. When she had reached the topmost branch, she suddenly cried out, O! thou shameless man, what abominable action is this? The husband replied, Woman, be silent; for such is the property of the tree, that whoever ascends it sees man or woman below in such situations. The cunning wife now came down, and said to her husband, what a charming garden and amusing spot is this; where one can gather fruit, and at the same time behold the wonders of the world! The husband replied, Destruction seize the wonders which falsely accuse man of wickedness!" (Scott's *Bahar-Danush*, vol. ii.) It is true, that the *Bahar-Danush* was not written till long after the age of Boccaccio, but the author Inatulla professes to have borrowed it from the traditions of the Bramins, from whom it may have been translated into the languages of Persia or Arabia, and imported from these regions to Europe by some crusader, like other Asiatic romances, which have served as the groundwork of so many of our old stories and poems. Indeed, I have been informed by an eminent oriental scholar, that the above story of the *Bahar-Danush* exists in a Hindu work, which he believes prior to the age of Boccaccio. That part of the tale in the *Decameron*, which relates to the stratagem by which the lady obtains a tooth from her husband, seems to have been suggested either by the *Conte Devot d'un roi qui voulut faire bruler le fils de son seneschal*, or the 68th story of the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, which is copied from the French tale, (see above, vol. i. p. 417.) The incidents in the novel of Boccaccio concerning the pear-tree form the second story in Fontaine's *La Gageure des trois Commeres*. They have also some resemblance to the Merchant's Tale in Chaucer, and by consequence to Pope's January and May.

At the conclusion of the seventh day, we are told, that before supper, Dioneo and Fiammetta sung together the story of Palamon and Arcite, which is the subject of Boccaccio's poem *The Theseide*, Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*, Fletcher's drama of the *Two Noble Kinsmen*, in which he is said to have been assisted by Shakspeare, and the *Palamon and Arcite* of Dryden. Never has fiction or tradition been embellished by such genius.

DAY VIII. contains stories of tricks or stratagems of men to women, of women to men, or of one man to another.\*

1. A young man of Milan had placed his affections on a lady, the wife of a rich merchant in that city; on declaring to her his attachment, she promised to comply with his wishes for two hundred florins of gold. Shocked at the avarice of his mistress, he borrowed from the husband the sum which he bestowed on the wife. On the departure of the merchant for Genoa, she sent for her lover to bring the money: he arrived, accompanied by a friend, in whose presence he gave her the two hundred florins, desiring her to deliver them to her husband when he should come home. He thus obtained the caresses of his venal mistress, and on the husband's return, informed him that having no farther occasion for the sum he had lately borrowed, he had repaid it to his wife. As she had received it in presence of a witness, she was obliged to refund the money she had so shamefully acquired. This is Chaucer's *Shipman's Tale*, or *Story of Dan John*: it is Fontaine's *A Femme avare Galant escroc*. The above stratagem is attributed to Captain Philip Stafford, in Johnson's *Lives of Pirates and Highwaymen*. Indeed, that work is full of tricks recorded by Boccaccio, Sabadino, and Sacchetti; which shows that it is a mere invention, unless Johnson's worthies resorted to the Italian novelists for instruction.

2. A priest having fallen in love with the wife of a peasant, goes to the cottage one day in absence of the hus-

\* Di quelle Beffe che tutto il giorno, o donna ad huomo, o huomo a donna, o l' uno huomo a l' altro si fanno.

band, and obtains whatever he desires from the wife, on depositing his cloak in her hands, as a pledge for payment of a certain sum. The priest afterwards finding that it would be impossible for him to spare the money; but feeling that it was requisite to redeem so essential a part of his dress, sends to his mistress for the loan of her mortar. He returns it with many thanks, at a time he knew her husband would be with her, and desires his messenger to ask for the cloak which had been left as a pledge when the mortar was borrowed. The woman is thus obliged to deliver it up, as she could not assert her right to retain it in presence of her husband.

This tale was probably suggested to the Italian novelist by the first part of the *Fabliau du Prestre et de la Dame*, though the imitation be not nearly so close as in most of the other tales in which Boccaccio has followed the productions of the *Trouveurs*. In the *Fabliau*, a priest, while on an amatory visit to the wife of a burgess, is nearly surprised by the unexpected coming of the husband. His mistress has just time to conceal him in a great basket, which stood in an adjacent apartment; but in the hurry he left his cloak behind him. He had not long remained in the basket, before it occurred to him that it might be applied to better purposes than concealment; taking it in his arms, he returned boldly to the room where the burgess was sitting with his wife, and requested as he had now brought back the basket, of which he had the loan, that the cloak which he left in pawn should be restored to him. (*Fabliaux par Barbazan et Meon, T. 4. p. 181.*)

4. The prebendary of Fiesole became enamoured of a widow in his neighbourhood. As he was old, and of disagreeable person, the lady was much distressed by his importunate solicitations. In order to get rid of them, she feigns a readiness to comply with his wishes, and desires him to come to her house on the following evening. The room in which he is received being darkened, she substitutes in her place a waiting-maid of hideous aspect. After he had remained for some time, she sends for his bishop. The whole family then burst into the room with lights, and the priest is at the same moment gratified with a view of

his superior, and the mistress for whom he had thus sacrificed his reputation.

This story is taken, with little variation, from the *Fabliau de Pretre et Alison*, of the *Trouveur Guillaume le Normand*, (*Le Grand*, 4, p. 297.) It is also the 47th of the 2d part of *Bandello*.

7. A man of letters, who had studied at Paris, becomes enamoured, on his return to Florence, of a young widow of that city. She is soon made acquainted with his passion, but resolves, as she had another gallant, to turn it into ridicule. One night when she expected her favoured lover, she sends a waiting-maid to direct the scholar to come that evening to the court behind her house, and wait till he be admitted. Here he remains for a long while amid the snow, which had fallen the day before, expecting every moment to be invited in, the widow and her lover laughing all the time at his credulity. An excuse is first sent to him, that the lady's brother is arrived at her house, but that he would not stay long. At length, towards morning, he is informed that he may depart, as the brother had remained all night. The scholar goes home almost dead with cold, resolving to be revenged for the trick which he now perceives had been played on him. In the course of a few months the lady is deserted by her lover, and applies to the scholar, to recall his affections by magical operations, in which she believes him to be skilful. Pretending to accede to her wishes, the clerk informs her that he will send an image of tin, with which she must bathe herself three times in a river, then ascend naked to the top of some unoccupied building, and remain there till two damsels appear, who will ask what she wishes to have done. Accordingly the lady retires to a farm which she possessed in the country, and having three times immersed herself at midnight in the Arno, she next ascends an uninhabited tower in the vicinity. The scholar, who lay in wait, removes the ladder by which she got up. A long dialogue then follows between them: he reproaches her with the trick she had played him; she begs forgiveness, and entreats to be permitted to descend. This, however, is not granted till the ensuing evening, by which time her



skin is all cracked and blistered by the bites of insects and the heat of the sun.

We are informed by some of the commentators on Boccaccio, that the circumstances related in this story happened to the author himself, and that the widow is the same with the one introduced in his *Laberinto d'Amore*. The unusual minuteness with which the tale is related gives some countenance to such an opinion; however this may be, it has evidently suggested the story, in the *Diable Boiteux*, of Patrice, whose mistress, Lusita, makes him remain a whole night in the street before her windows, on the false pretence that her brother, Don Gaspard, is in the house, and that her lover must wait till he depart.

8. Two intimate friends, one called Zeppa, and the other Spinelloccio, both of whom were married, resided in Sienna. Spinelloccio being frequently in the house of Zeppa, fell in love with the wife of his friend. He carried on an intrigue for some time without being detected, but one day the lady, thinking that her husband was abroad, sent for her gallant, and Zeppa saw him enter his wife's apartment. As soon as Spinelloccio returned home, Zeppa upbraided his spouse with her conduct, but agreed to forgive her, provided she would ask her gallant to the house next day, and afterwards shut him into a chest, on pretence of hearing her husband coming. This being executed, Zeppa enters the room where his friend and rival was confined; he next sends for the wife of Spinelloccio, and having informed her of the conduct of her husband persuades her to a mutual revenge, corresponding to the nature of the offence. Spinelloccio was then drawn from his concealment, "*after which*," says the novelist, "*all parties concerned dined very amicably together, and the same good understanding continued amongst them for the time to come.*"

This story is in the *Seven Wise Masters of Hebers*, but was probably suggested to Boccaccio by the latter part of the *Fabliau Constant du Hamel*, (*Le Grand*, 4, 226.) There a priest, a provost, and a forester, attempt to seduce a peasant's wife. The husband has thus a triple vengeance to execute: But in the *Fabliau* this revenge was an ungrateful return to the wife, who had not yielded to



the solicitations of her lovers, but had contrived to coop them up successively in a tun which held feathers. This Fabliau again probably derived its origin from some oriental tale. In the story of Arouya, in the Persian Tales, a lady, solicited by a *cadi*, a doctor, and governor, exposes them to each other.

To Persia the story had probably come from the Bramins, as there is a similar incident in the Bahar-Danush, which is founded on their traditions:—"Gohera saw her husband, Houssum, conducted to the Cutwal for examination. She followed, and requested that magistrate to release him; but he refused, unless she would submit to his embraces. She then went to the Cauzi, and requested his interference; but the judge offered her relief only on the same conditions as the Cutwal. She seemingly consented, and appointed a time for his visit at her lodgings. She then went to the Cutwal, and made also an assignation with that officer. At night the Cauzi comes, bringing with him provisions for a treat, and while feasting is interrupted by a knocking at the door. Fearful of being discovered, he entreats Gohera to conceal him, and she shows him a large jar, into which he creeps, and the lid is fastened upon him. The Cutwal now enters, when, after some time, the door sounds again, and this magistrate is put into a chest, which is locked by Gohera. Next morning she hires porters, and has the grave magistrates carried before the Sultan, who orders them to be severely punished, and Houssum to be released." (Scott's Bahar-Danush, vol. iii. Appendix.) The story in the Decameron is introduced in Fontaine's *le Faiseur d'oreilles et le raccommodeur de Moules*.

10. "It was," says Boccaccio, "and perhaps is still, the custom in all seaports, that traders should lodge their merchandise in a public warehouse, and that an account of the nature and value of the goods should be entered in a register. This record being open to all, was of great service to the fair damsels of Palermo, who lay in wait to entrap wealthy strangers." Now, a young Florentine, called Salabaetto, was sent by his masters to Sicily, to dispose of some woollen cloth, valued at 500 florins of gold. This young man soon fell under the observation of a

woman, styling herself Signora Jancofiore, who sent a waiting-maid to inform him how deeply she was enamoured of his person,\* and to request him to meet her at one of the public baths. There, and afterwards at her own house, which is described as elegantly fitted up, she personated a lady of rank and fortune, at length, when she had completely fascinated the Florentine, she entered the room, one night while he was at her house, in a flood of tears, and informed him she had just received letters from a brother, acquainting her, that unless she could transmit him a thousand florins within eight days, he would inevitably lose his head. As she affirmed that she could not procure the whole within the specified time, the Tuscan agreed to lend her 500 florins, which he had just procured by the sale of the woollen cloth. When she had got possession of this sum, she became more shy of admitting him to her house. After waiting a long while for payment of the money, without receiving it, he saw he had been duped; but as he had no proof of the debt, and was afraid to return to Florence, he sailed for Naples. There his friend Camigiano, treasurer of the Empress of Constantinople, at that time resided. Having acquainted him with the loss sustained, at the suggestion of Camigiano he re-embarked for Palermo with a great number of casks, which, on his arrival, he entered in the warehouse as being filled with oil: he then resumed his acquaintance with his former mistress, and appeared to be satisfied with her apologies. Jancofiore, who understood that the late importation was valued at two thousand florins, and that her lover expected still more precious commodities, thought herself in the way of a richer prize than she had yet obtained, and repaid the five hundred florins, that the Florentine might entertain no suspicions of her honesty.

\* Plautus, in his *Menechmi*, attributes a similar custom to the courtesans of the Mediterranean islands in his day:

Morem hunc Meretrices habent:  
 Ad portum mittunt servulos ancillulas,  
 Si qua peregrina navis in portum aderit;  
 Rogunt civitatis sit—quid ei nomen siet:  
 Post illac extemplo sese adplicant.

Then, on pretence that one of his ships had been taken by corsairs, he procured from her a loan of a thousand florins, on the security of the merchandise which she believed to be in the warehouse, and with this sum he departed to Florence, without the knowledge of his mistress. When she had despaired of his return, she broke open the casks he had left behind, which were now discovered to be filled with salt water, and a little oil on the surface.

The origin of this story may be found in the tales of Petrus Alphonsus. There a certain person lends a sum of money to a treacherous friend, who refuses to repay it. Another person is instructed by the lender to fill some trunks with heavy stones, and offer to deposit this pretended treasure in the hands of the cheat. While the negotiation is going on, he who had been defrauded comes to repeat his demand, which the false friend now complies with, lest any suspicion should fall on his honesty in presence of the new dupe. This like most other stories of Alphonsus, was probably borrowed from the east, as a similar one occurs in the Arabian Nights. From Alphonsus the tale passed to the Trouveurs (Le Grand, *Fabliaux*, 3, 282,) to the author of the *Gesta Romanorum*, (c. 118,) and of the *Cento Novelle Antiche*. Boccaccio probably obtained it from the 74th tale of this last work, where the story, as related by Petrus Alphonsus, is given as the third example of those, who, trying to be better, lost the whole. “*Qui conta de certi che per cercare del meglio perderono il tutto.*” The novel of Boccaccio has some resemblance to the under-plot of *Rule a Wife and have a Wife*, where Estifania, a courtesan, insnares Michael Perez by personating a lady of quality, but is herself afterwards cozened with regard to the contents of his caskets.

DAY IX. During this day the narrators are allowed to recount stories on any subject they please,\* but they seem for the most part to have followed the topics of the preceding one.

1. A widow lady in Pistoia had two lovers, the one called Rinuccio, the other Alexander, of whom neither was acceptable to her. At a time when she was harassed

\* *Di quello che piu gli aggrada.*

by their importunities, a person named Scannadio, of reprobate life and hideous aspect, died and was buried. His death suggested to the lady a mode of getting rid of her lovers, by asking them to perform a service which she thought herself certain they would not undertake. She acquainted Alexander, that the body of Scannadio, for a purpose she would afterwards explain, was to be brought to her dwelling by one of her kinsmen, and feeling a horror at such an inmate, she would grant him her love, if, attired in the dead garments of Scannadio, he would occupy his place in the coffin, and allow himself to be conveyed to her house in the place of the deceased. To Rinuccio she sent to request that he would bring the corpse of Scannadio at midnight to her habitation. Both lovers, contrary to expectation, agree to fulfil her desires. During night she watches the event, and soon perceives Rinuccio coming along bearing Alexander, who was equipped in the shroud of Scannadio. On the approach of some of the watchmen with a light, Rinuccio throws down his burden and runs off, while Alexander returns home in the dead clothes. Next day each demands the love of his mistress, which she refuses, pretending to believe that no attempt had been made to execute her commands.

In an old English ballad a similar expedient is devised by a prioress, to get rid of her three lovers, a knight, a prelate, and a burgher. She promises her affections to the first, if he will lie all night in a chapel as a dead body, and wrapped in a winding-sheet. Next she requires the parson to say mass over the corpse, which she pretends is that of a cousin who had not been properly interred. She then tells the merchant to bring the body to her house, as the deceased owed her money, and must not be buried till his friends discharge the debt; and, in order to terrify the priest, she desires that he should equip himself in disguise of the devil. The lovers all meet in the chapel, where both the knight and priest run off, so that the merchant has no corpse to bring home to his mistress. Hence the allotted service being accomplished by none of them, the lady refuses her love to all three. This tale is entitled the Pryorys and her Three Wooyrs, and has been

published in Jamieson's Popular Ballads from a MS. in the British Museum, attributed to Lydgate.

2. Is the Pseautier of Fontaine.

6. A poor man who kept a small hut in the district of Mugnone, near Florence, for the entertainment of travellers, had a comely daughter, called Niccolosa, of whom a young gentleman of Florence, called Pinuccio, became enamoured. As the lover had reason to believe the affection reciprocal, he set out with Adriano, one of his companions, to whom he imparted the secret. He took his way by the plain of Mugnone, and as he contrived to come to the house of Niccolosa's father late in the evening, he had a pretext for insisting on quarters. Pinuccio and his friend were lodged in one of three beds, which were in the same room: the landlord and his wife lay in the second, and Niccolosa by herself in the remaining one, to which Pinuccio stole when he thought his host and hostess were asleep. Adriano rising soon after, accidentally removes a cradle which stood at the side of the landlord's bed. The hostess next gets up, but when returning to lie down misses the cradle, and thinking she had nearly gone to bed to her guests, she falls into the very error she wished to avoid; and Adriano, whom she mistakes for her husband, has thus no reason to repent his trouble in accompanying his friend to Mugnone. Pinuccio now intending to return to his own bed, being also misled by the cradle, goes to that of the landlord, to whom, as to his friend, he recounts the manner in which he had passed the night. The enraged father discovers himself by his threats, and the hostess hearing the noise, and still fancying herself with her husband, remarks that their guests are quarrelling. As Adriano thinks proper to reply to this observation, she instantly discovers her mistake, and slips into bed to her daughter. She thence calls to her husband to know what was the matter. On learning the intelligence which he had just received from Pinuccio, she asserts it must be false, as she herself had lain all night with their daughter, and had never closed her eyes. Adriano overhearing this conversation, calls out to Pinuccio, that it is lamentable he cannot get over that habit of walking and speaking in his sleep. To aid the deception, Pinuccio talks for some time

in a manner the most incoherent, and then pretends to awake suddenly. The landlord is thus satisfied, and ever remains unconscious of his double disgrace.

This tale has been taken from an old Fabliau of the Trouveur Jean de Boves, entitled *De Gombert et des deux Clercs*. There two clerks go to get their corn grinded. The miller pretends to be from home, and while they are seeking him through the wood, he purloins the corn, but without their suspecting him of the theft. The night scene corresponds with the *Decameron*, except that the cradle is removed intentionally by one of the clerks, in order to entrap the miller's wife: the catastrophe, however, is different; for the miller, during his quarrel with the other clerk, on account of the information he had unconsciously given, strikes a light, and discovers the circumstances in which his wife is placed. He addresses her in terms the most energetic. She answers that what she had done was undesigned, which is more than he can say of stealing the corn. The Reeve's Tale in Chaucer seems to be compounded of the Fabliau and the novel of Boccaccio. It bears the nearest resemblance to the former, but in one or two incidents is different from both. A miller deprived two clerks of Cambridge of their corn, by letting their horse loose when they came to have it ground. They find it gone when they return from their search of the animal. Suspecting the thief, they come back one evening with the purpose of being revenged. The cradle is intentionally removed by the one clerk, while the other is with the daughter. During the squabble, the miller's wife mistakes her husband for one of the clerks, and knocks him down. He is then soundly beat by the clerks, who ride off with their corn; a solution by no means so ingenious as that either of the Fabliau or the tale in the *Decameron*. The story, as related by Boccaccio, has been imitated in the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, and in the *Berceau* of Fontaine.

9. Two young men repair to Jerusalem to consult Solomon. One asks how he may be well liked, the other how he may best manage a froward wife. Solomon advises the first to love others, and the second to repair to the bridge of Oca. From this last counsel neither can extract any meaning, but it is explained on their road home; for



when they come to the bridge of that name, they meet a number of caravans and mules, and one of these animals being restive, its master forces it on with a stick. The advice of Solomon being now understood, is followed, and with complete success. From all the Italian novelists we hear of this species of discipline being exercised by husbands, and it is always mentioned with approbation. In many of the *Fabliaux*, as *De la dame qui fut corrigée*, (*Le Grand*, 3,204), the cudgel chiefly is employed for procuring domestic felicity. It may perhaps appear singular, that an age of which the characteristic was veneration for the fair sex, should have given commencement to a long series of jests, founded on the principle, that manual discipline is requisite to correct the evil disposition of some wives, and to support the virtue of others. “*La mauvaise femme convient il battre, et bonne aussi, a fin qu’ elle ne se change,*” is a maxim inculcated in the romance of *Milles et Amys*, which was written in the brightest days of chivalry.

10. This story is taken from the *Fabliau* of the *Trouveur Rutebeuf*, *De la Demoiselle qui vouloit voler*, (*Le Grand*, vol. iv. p. 316), in which a clerk, while pretending to add wings and feathers to a lady, that she might fly, acts in a similar manner with the priest of *Barletta*. It is *Fontaine’s La Jument du compere Pierre*.

The stories in

DAY X. Are of those who acted with magnificence or generosity in matters of love, or any thing else.\*

1. A noble Italian, called *Ruggieri*, entered into the service of *Alphonso*, King of Spain. He soon perceives that his majesty is extremely liberal to others, but thinking his own merits not sufficiently rewarded, he asks leave to return to his own country. This the king grants, after presenting him with a fine mule for his journey. *Alphonso* directs one of his attendants to join him on the road, to note if he make any complaint of the treatment he had received, and, if he should, to command his return. The mule having stopped in a river, and refusing to go on, *Rug-*

\* *Di chi liberalmente, o vero magnificamente alcuna cosa operasse, intorno a fatti d’amore, o d’altra cosa.*

gieri said she was like the person who gave her. Ruggieri being in consequence brought back to the capital, and his words reported to the king, he is introduced into the presence of his majesty, and asked why he had compared him to the mule ; "Because," replied Ruggieri, "the mule would not stop where it ought, but stood still when it should have gone on ; in like manner you give where it is not suitable, and withhold where you ought to bestow." On hearing this, the king carries him into a hall, and shows him two shut coffers, one filled with earth, another containing the crown and sceptre, with a variety of precious stones. Alphonso desires him to take which he pleases ; and Ruggieri having accidentally fixed on the one with earth, the king affirms that it is bad fortune that has all along prevented him from being a partaker of the royal benefits. Then having presented him with the valuable chest, he allows him to return to Italy.

The rudiments of this story may be traced as far back as the romance of Josaphat and Barlaam. A king commanded four chests to be made, two of which were covered with gold, and secured by golden locks, but were filled with rotten bones of human carcasses. The other two were overlaid with pitch, and bound with rugged cords, but were replenished with precious stones, and ointments of most exquisite odour. Having called his nobles together, the king placed these chests before them, and asked which they deemed most valuable. They pronounced those with the golden coverings to be the most precious, and surveyed the other two with contempt. "I foresaw," said the king, "what would be your determination, for you look with the eyes of sense ; but to discern baseness or value, which are hid within, we must look with the eyes of the mind : " he then ordered the golden chests to be opened, which exhaled an intolerable stench, and filled the beholders with horror. The story next appeared in the 109th chapter of the continental *Gesta Romanorum*. There an innkeeper found a chest, which he discovered to be full of money. It was claimed by the owner, and the innkeeper, in order to ascertain if it was the will of Providence he should restore it, ordered three pasties to be made. One he filled with earth, the second

with bones of dead men, and the third with the money: he gave his choice of these three to the rightful proprietor, who fixed successively on the two with earth and bones, whence the innkeeper drew an inference in his own favour. This story came to Boccaccio, with the farther modifications it had received in the *Cento Novelle Antiche*. It is related, conformably to the circumstances in the *Decameron*, both in the *Speculum Historiale*, and in the *Confessio Amantis* of Gower, who cites a *cronikil* as his authority for the tale. Thence it passed into the English *Gesta Romanorum*, where three vessels are exhibited to a lady for her choice, the first of gold, but filled with dead bones; the second of silver, containing earth and worms; and the last of lead, but replenished with precious stones. It was probably from this last work that Shakspeare adopted the story of the caskets, which forms part of the plot of his *Merchant of Venice*.

5. Dianora, the wife of a rich man of Udina, in the country of Friuli, in order to get rid of the importunities of her lover Ansaldo, told his emissary that she would requite his affection, if he produced a garden in January, which was then approaching, as fresh and blooming as if it were the month of May. This condition, which the lady conceived impossible to be fulfilled, her lover accomplished by aid of a necromancer. The garden being exhibited to the lady, she went in the utmost distress to her husband, and informed him of the engagement she had come under. As he commanded her at all events to abide by her promise, she waited on Ansaldo, and told him she had come at her husband's desire, to fulfil the agreement. Ansaldo, touched with her affliction and the generosity of her husband, refused this offer; and the necromancer, who happened to be in the house at the time, declined to accept the remuneration which he had stipulated for his services.

Manni observes, that this novel was probably founded on a story current in the age of Boccaccio, (and subsequently mentioned by Trithemus,) concerning a Jew physician, who, in the year 876, in the middle of winter, caused by enchantment a garden, with trees and flowers in bloom, to appear before a numerous and splendid company. The

story, however, of Dianora, as well as the 4th of the present day, had formerly been told by Boccaccio himself, in the 5th book of his *Philocopo*, which is an account of the loves of Flores and Blancafior. There, among other questions, the comparative merit of the husband and lover is discussed at the court of Naples, when the hero of the romance lands in that country. This story of Boccaccio is the origin of the *Frankelien's Tale* of Chaucer, in which the circumstances are precisely the same as in the *Decameron*, except that the impossible thing required by the lady is, that her lover should remove the rocks from the coast of Britany: a similar tale, however, according to Tyrwhitt, occurs in an old Breton lay, from which he conceives the incidents may have come immediately to the English poet. Boccaccio's novel is unquestionably the origin of a story which occupies the whole of the 12th canto of the *Orlando Innamorato*, and is related by a lady to Rinaldo, while he escorts her on a journey. Iroldo, a Babylonian knight, had a wife, called Tisbina, who was beloved by a young man of the name of Prasildo. This lady, in order to get rid of her admirer's importunities, offered to requite his affection, provided he should gain admittance to an enchanted garden in a wood, near the confines of Barbary, and bring her a slip of a tree growing there, of which the blossoms were pearls, the fruit emeralds, and the branches gold. The lover sets out on his expedition, and on his way meets an old man, who gives him directions for entering the magic garden with safety, and bestows on him a mirror to drive away the Medusa, by whom it was guarded. By this means Prasildo having accomplished the conditions, returns to Babylon, and the lady is commanded by the husband to fulfil the obligations she had come under. Prasildo, however, declines to take advantage of this compliance, and restores Tisbinia to her lord. But Iroldo, determined not to be outdone in courtesy, insists on resigning his wife to Prasildo, and then leaves Babylon for ever, as he cannot endure to behold even the happiness of which he was himself the author. The tale of Boccaccio is supposed by the editor of Beaumont and Fletcher to be also the origin of the *Triumph of Honour*, the first of their *Four Plays* in

One; but it is more probable that these dramatists took their plot from the Frankelien's Tale in Chaucer, as the impossible thing required in the Triumph of Honour, by Dorigen from her lover Martius, is that a mass of rocks should be converted into "a champain field."

8. Titus, the son of a Roman patrician, resided during the period of his education at Athens, in the house of Chremes, a friend of his father. A warm and brotherly affection arises betwixt the young Roman and Gisippus, the son of Chremes. They prosecute their studies together, and have no happiness but in each other's society. Gisippus, on the death of his father, being persuaded by his friends to marry, fixes on Sophronia, an Athenian lady of exquisite beauty. Before the day appointed for the celebration of the nuptials, he carries Titus to visit her. The Roman is smitten with an involuntary passion for the intended bride, and, after a long internal struggle, reluctantly discloses his love to Gisippus. This disinterested friend resigns his pretensions, and on the night of the marriage, Sophronia, without her knowledge receives Titus instead of Gisippus as her husband. The lady and her family are at first greatly exasperated by the deception, but are afterwards pacified, and Sophronia proceeds with Titus to Rome, whither he was now summoned on account of the death of his father. Some time after this, Gisippus, being reduced to great poverty, repairs to Rome, with the view of receiving succour from his friend; but Titus, not knowing him in the miserable plight in which he appeared, passes him on the street. Gisippus, thinking he had seen and despised him, retires to a solitary part of the city, and next day in despair accuses himself of a murder which he had there seen committed. Titus, who happens to be in court at the time, now recognises his friend, and in order to save him from punishment, declares that he himself was guilty of the crime. Both, however, are set at liberty, on the confession of the real murderer, who, being present at this singular contest, is touched with pity and remorse. The story coming to the knowledge of Octavius Cæsar, who was then one of the Triumvirs, the delinquent, for the sake of the friends, is pardoned also. Titus bestows his sister in marriage on Gisippus, re-es-

tablishes his fortune, and prevails on him to settle in Rome.

This tale is taken from the 2d story of Petrus Alphonsus; but Boccaccio has made considerable alterations, if we may judge of the original from the form in which it is exhibited by Le Grand (vol. iii. p. 262). There it is not two young men brought up together, who form this romantic attachment, but two mercantile correspondents, the one residing in Syria, and the other in Eygpt; and the renunciation of his mistress by the latter takes place soon after his first interview with his partner. The change which has been made in this particular by the Italian novelist, is a manifest improvement. In the next place, in the tale of Alphonsus, it is not thought necessary to deceive the bride after the nuptials, in the manner related in the Decameron; she is transferred, without farther ceremony, as a piece of property, from one friend to the other, which is a convincing proof of the eastern origin of the tale. Lastly, in Alphonsus, the friend who is reduced in his circumstances does not fancy himself neglected by his former companion; he sees the murder committed before he enters Rome, and avails himself of the incident to get free from a life in which he had no longer any enjoyment.

As thus improved by Boccaccio, the story ranks high among the serious Italian novels. The internal conflict of Titus—the subsequent contest between the friends—the harangue of Titus to the two assembled families, and the beautiful eulogy on friendship, which terminates the tale, form, in the opinion of critics, the most eloquent passages in the Decameron, or perhaps in the Italian language.

The story of Titus and Gisippus was translated into Latin by the novelist Bandello, and into English by Edward Lewicke, 1562, whose version perhaps directed to this tale the notice of Goldsmith, who has inserted it in his miscellanies, though it is there said to be taken from a Byzantine historian, and the friends are called Septimius and Alcander. Boccaccio's story has also evidently suggested the concluding incidents of Greene's *Philomela*, and is the subject of an old French drama, by Hardy, entitled *Gesippe, ou Les Deux Amis*.

10. Gualtier, Marquis of Salluzzo, being solicited by



his friends to marry, chooses Griselda, the daughter of a peasant, who was one of his vassals. Wishing to make trial of the temper of his wife, he habitually addresses her, soon after the marriage, in the harshest language. He then successively deprives her of a son and daughter, to whom she had given birth, and persuades her that he had murdered them, because his vassals would not submit to be governed by the descendants of a peasant. Next he produces a fictitious bill of divorce, by virtue of which he sends back his wife to the cottage of her father, and lastly, he recalls her to his palace, on pretence that she may put it in order, and officiate at the celebration of his marriage with a second consort. The lady, whom Griselda at first mistakes for the bride, proves to be her own daughter. Her son is also restored to her, and she is rewarded for her long suffering, which she had borne with proverbial patience, by the redoubled and no longer disguised affection of her husband.

The original of this celebrated tale was at one time believed to have been an old MS., entitled *Le Parement des Dames*. This was first asserted by Duchat in his notes on Rabelais. It was afterwards mentioned by Le Grand and Manni, and through them by the Abbé de Sade and Galland, (*Discours sur quelques anciens poètes*;) but Mr. Tyrwhitt informs us that Olivier de la Marche, the author of the *Parement des Dames*, was not born for many years after the composition of the *Decameron*, so that some other original must be sought. Noguier, in his *Histoire de Thoulouse*, asserts, that the patient heroine of the tale actually existed in 1103. In the *Annales d'Aquitaine*, she is said to have flourished in 1025. That there was such a person is also positively asserted by Foresti da Bergamo, in his *Chronicle*, though he does not fix the period at which she lived. The probability, therefore, is, that the novel of Boccaccio, as well as the *Parement des Dames*, has been founded on some real or traditional incident; a conjecture which is confirmed by the letter of Petrarch to Boccaccio, written after a perusal of the *Decameron*, in which he says that he had heard the story of Griseldis related many years before.

From whatever source derived, Griselda appears to have

been the most popular of all the stories of the Decameron. In the 14th century, the prose translations of it in French were very numerous; Le Grand mentions that he had seen upwards of twenty, under the different names, *Miroir des Dames*, *Exemples de bonnes et mauvaises femmes*, &c. Petrarch, who had not seen the Decameron till a short time before his death, (which shows that Boccaccio was ashamed of the work,) read it with much admiration, as appears from his letters, and translated it into Latin in 1373. Chaucer, who borrowed the story from Petrarch, assigns it to the Clerk of Oxenforde, in his *Canterbury Tales*. The clerk declares in his prologue, that he learned it from Petrarch at Padua; and if we may believe Warton, Chaucer, when in Italy, actually heard the story related by Petrarch, who, before translating it into Latin, had got it by heart, in order to repeat to his friends. The tale became so popular in France, that the comedians of Paris represented, in 1393, a Mystery in French verse, entitled, *Le Mystere de Griseldis*. There is also an English drama, called, *Patient Grissel*, entered in Stationers' Hall, 1599. One of Goldoni's plays, in which the tyrannical husband is King of Thessaly, is also formed on the subject of *Griseldis*. In a novel by Luigi Alamanni, a Count of Barcelona subjects his wife to a similar trial of patience with that which *Griselda* experienced. He proceeds, however, so far as to force her to commit dishonourable actions at his commands. The experiment, too, is not intended as a test of his wife's obedience, but as a revenge on account of her once having refused him as a husband.

The story of Boccaccio seems hardly deserving of so much popularity and imitation. "An English reader," says Mr. Ellis in his notes to Way's *Fabliaux*, "is naturally led to compare it with our national ballad, the *Nut-Brown Maid* (the *Henry and Emma of Prior*), because both compositions were intended to describe a perfect female character, exposed to the severest trials, submitting without a murmur to unmerited cruelty, disarming a tormentor by gentleness and patience; and, finally, recompensed for her virtues by transports rendered more exquisite by her suffering." The author then proceeds to show, that although the intention be the same, the conduct of the

ballad is superior to that of the novel. "In the former, the cruel scrutiny of the feelings is suggested by the jealousy of a lover, anxious to explore the whole extent of his empire over the heart of a mistress; his doubts are perhaps natural, and he is only culpable, because he consents to purchase the assurance of his own happiness at the expense of the temporary anguish and apparent degradation of the object of his affections. But she is prepared for the exertion of her firmness by slow degrees; she is strengthened by passion, by the consciousness of the desperate step she had already taken, and by the conviction that every sacrifice was tolerable which insured her claim to the gratitude of her lover, and was paid as the price of his happiness; her trial is short, and her recompense is permanent. For his doubts and jealousy she perhaps found an excuse in her own heart; and in the moment of her final exultation, and triumph in the consciousness of her own excellence, and the prospect of unclouded security, she might easily forgive her lover for having evinced that the idol of his heart was fully deserving of his adoration. Gautier, on the contrary, is neither blinded by love, nor tormented by jealousy: he merely wishes to gratify a childish curiosity, by discovering how far conjugal obedience can be carried; and the recompense of unexampled patience is a mere permission to wear a coronet without farther molestation. Nor, as in the ballad, is security obtained by a momentary uneasiness, but by long years of suffering. It may be doubted, whether the emotions to which the story of Boccaccio gives rise, are at all different from those which would be excited by an execution on the rack. The merit, too, of resignation, depends much on its motive; and the cause of morality is not greatly promoted by bestowing, on a passive submission to capricious tyranny, the commendation which is only due to an humble acquiescence in the just dispensations of Providence."

The budget of stories being exhausted with the tale of Griselda, the party of pleasure return to Florence and the pestilence.

There are few works which have had an equal influence on literature with the Decameron of Boccaccio. Even in

England its effects were powerful. From it Chaucer adopted the notion of the frame in which he has inclosed his tales, and the general manner of his stories, while in some instances, as we have seen, he has merely versified the novels of the Italian. In 1566, William Paynter printed many of Boccaccio's stories in English, in his work called the Palace of Pleasure. The first translation contained sixty novels, and it was soon followed by another volume, comprehending thirty-four additional tales. These are the pages of which Shakspeare made so much use. From Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, we learn that one of the great amusements of our ancestors was reading Boccaccio aloud, an entertainment of which the effects were speedily visible in the literature of the country. The first English translation, however, of the whole Decameron, did not appear till 1620. In France, Boccaccio found early and illustrious imitators. In his own country he brought his native tongue to perfection, and gave stability to a mode of composition, which before his time had only existed in a rude state in Italy; he collected the current tales of the age, which he decorated with new circumstances, and delivered in a style which has no parallel for elegance, naiveté, and grace. Hence his popularity was unbounded, and his imitators more numerous than those of any author recorded in the annals of literature.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

Italian Imitators of Boccaccio—Sacchetti—Ser Giovanni—Massuccio—Sabadino—Giraldi Cinthio—Straparola—Bandello—Malespini, &c.—French Imitators.

OF the Italian imitators of Boccaccio, the earliest was FRANCO SACCHETTI, a Florentine, who was born in 1335, and died about the year 1410. He was a poet in his youth, and travelled to Sclavonia and other countries, to attend to some mercantile concerns. As he advanced in

years he was raised to a distinguished rank in the magistracy of Florence; he became *podestà* of Faenza and other places, and at length governor of a Florentine province in the Romagna. Notwithstanding his honours he lived and died poor, but is said to have been a good-humoured facetious man; he left an immense collection of sonnets and canzone, some of which have been lost, and others are still in MS. Of his tales there were a great variety of MS. copies, which is a proof of the popularity of the author, but all of them had originally been very incomplete, or became so before any one thought of printing the works of this novelist. At length, in 1724, about two hundred and fifty of the three hundred stories, originally written by Sacchetti, were edited by Giovanni Bottari, from two MSS. in the Laurentian library, which were the most ancient, and at the same time the most perfect, at that time extant. This edition was printed at Naples, though with the date of Florence, in two vols. 8vo., and was followed by two impressions, which are *fac similes* of the former, and can hardly be distinguished from it.

Crescimbeni places Sacchetti next to Boccaccio in merit as well as in time. Warton affirms that his tales were composed earlier than the Decameron; but this must be a mistake, as, from the historical incidents mentioned, they could not have been written before 1376. Indeed, the novelist himself, in his proœmium, says he was induced to undertake the work from the example of Boccaccio. "Riguardando all' eccellente poeta Giovanni Boccaccio, il quale descrivendo il libro Cento Novelle, &c., Io Franco Sacchetti mi propose di scrivere la presente opera." Were other evidence necessary than the declaration of Sacchetti himself, it is mentioned that he wrote at a much later period than Boccaccio, and in imitation of that author, by many of the Italian commentators, and critics, especially Borghini, in his *Origine di Firenze*,\* Cinelli in his catalogue of Florentine writers,† and the deputies employed for the correction of the Decameron. All these authors also

\* F. Sacchetti scrisse intorno all' anno 1400.

† Qual opera scrisse Sacchetti mosso dal esempio del Boccaccio, con stile di lui piu puro e familiare.

declare, that most of the incidents related by Sacchetti actually occurred. The novelist, in his introduction, informs us that he had made a collection of all ancient and modern tales; to some incidents related by him he had been witness, and a few had happened to himself. The work, he says, was compiled and written for the entertainment of his countrymen, on account of the wretched state of their capital, which was afflicted by the plague, and torn by civil dissensions.

At the present day I fear the tales of Sacchetti will hardly amuse, in more favourable circumstances. His work wants that dramatic form, which is a principal charm in the Decameron, and which can alone bestow unity or connexion on this species of composition. The merit of a pure and easy style is indeed allowed him by all the critics of his own country, and his tales are also regarded by the Italian antiquaries, who frequently avail themselves of his works, as most valuable records of some curious historical facts, and of customs that had fallen into disuse; but their intrinsic merit, merely considered as stories, is not great. There are few novels of ingenious gallantry, and none of any length, interest, or pathos, like the Griselda, or the Cymon and Iphigenia of the Decameron. A great number of them are accounts of foolish tricks performed by Buffalmacco, the painter, and played on Messer Dolcibene, and Alberto da Siena, who seem to have been the butts of that age, as Calandrino was in the time of Boccaccio. But by far the greatest proportion of the work consists of sayings or repartees, which resemble, except in merit, the Facetiae of Poggio. Sismondi, in the *Histoire de la Literature du midi de l'Europe*, has pronounced a very accurate judgment on the tales of Sacchetti.—“Au reste, quelque eloge que l'on fasse de la pureté et de l'elegance de son style, Je le trouve plus curieux a consulter sur les mœurs de son temps qu'entraînant par sa gaité lorsque il croit être le plus plaisant. Il rapporte dans ses Nouvelles presque toujours des evenemens de son temps et d'autour de lui: ce sont des anecdotes domestiques—de petits accidens de menage, qui, en general, me paroissent tres-peu rejouissans; quelquefois des friponneries qui ne sont guere adroites, des plaisante-



ries qui ne sont gueres fines ; et l'on est souvent tout etonné de voir un plaisant de profession s'avouer vaincu par un mot piquant qui lui a dit un enfant ou un rustre, et qui ne nous cause pas beaucoup d'admiration. Apres avoir lu ces Nouvelles, on ne peut s'empêcher de conclure que l'art de la conversation n'avait pas fait dans le quatorzieme siecle des progrès aussi rapides que les autres beaux arts, et que ces grands hommes a qui nous devons tant de chefs d'œuvre n'étaient point si bons a entendre causer que des gens qui ne les valent pas."—Although this opinion seems on the whole well founded, a few examples may be adduced as specimens of the manner of Sacchetti, in the style of composition which he has chiefly adopted.

One day while a blacksmith was singing, or rather bawling out the verses of Dante, that poet happened to pass at the time, and in a sudden emotion of anger, threw down all the workman's utensils. On the blacksmith complaining of this treatment, Dante replied, "I am only doing to your tools what you do to my verses : I will leave you unmolested, if you cease to spoil my productions." This foolish jest is elsewhere told of Ariosto and other poets.

Some one having come unasked to a feast, and being reproved for his forwardness by the other guests, said it was not his fault that he had not been invited.

A boy of fourteen years of age astonishes a company with the smartness and sagacity of his conversation. One of the number remarks, that the folly of grown-up men is usually in proportion to the sense of their childhood. "You," replies the boy, "must have been a person of extraordinary wisdom in your infancy." This story is the *Puer facete dicax* in Poggio's *Facetiae*, and is there told of a cardinal and a child who delivered a harangue in presence of the pope.

A Florentine buffoon, seeing a senator and a person of villanous appearance quarrelling at a gaming-house, and the spectators looking quietly on without interfering, offered himself as umpire. This being accepted, he decided for the rascal, without hearing the state of the game, on the ground that where two persons of an exterior so dissimilar

dispute, the lookers-on take the part of the man of respectable appearance, if he has the least shadow of right. There is a similar story recorded of a decision given by the Chevalier de Grammont against Louis XIV.

Philip of Valois lost a favourite hawk, for which he offered a reward of two hundred francs. This falcon was some time after found by a peasant, who, recognising the royal bird by the *fleurs de lis* engraved on the bells, carried it to the palace, and was admitted to present it to his majesty by the usher of the chamber, on condition that he should give him half of whatever recompense was bestowed. The peasant informed the king of this agreement, and solicited as his reward fifty strokes of the baton. He accordingly receives twenty-five blows, and the usher has the remainder of the gratification; but the clown afterwards privately obtains a pecuniary remuneration from the monarch. This story coincides with an English ballad of the end of the 14th century, published in Weber's *Metrical Romances*, entitled *Sir Cleges*, where the knight of that name, who wishes to present an offering to King Uter, is admitted into the palace by the porter, and introduced to the royal presence by the steward, on condition that each should receive a third of the recompense bestowed on him by the monarch. The knight being requested by the king to fix his reward, chooses twelve *bastinados*, eight of which he enjoys the satisfaction of distributing with his own hand between the steward and the porter.

These are a few of the tales of *Sacchetti*, which are said to have had some foundation in fact. There are also a good many stories derived from the East, through the medium of the *Gesta Romanorum* and the *Fabliaux*.

138. The master of a family, resolving to rule his house without dispute, places a pair of breeches in the hall, and calls on his wife to come and fight for them, if she wishes any longer to contest the superiority. This novel of *Sacchetti* is incomplete, and there is no account of the issue of the combat, but it is evidently taken from a *fabliau*, entitled *De Sire Hain et de dame Anieuse* (*Le Grand*, 3, 190), where the combat ends in favour of the husband. This contest has probably given rise to the French phrase,

Elle porte les culotes, which has become proverbial, I believe, in every European nation where the pre-eminence is disputed.

140. From the story in the *Fabliaux* concerning three Blind Beggars of Compiègne (see above, vol. i. p. 406, &c.) In the original, however, they get no money, but in *Sacchetti* one of their number receives a small coin, and is told it is one more valuable,—an alteration which is certainly no improvement. The tale, as related by *Sacchetti*, is the second novel of *Sozzini*.

152. Story of a man who gives a present of an ass, that had been taught some curious tricks, to a great lord, and receives in return a horse finely caparisoned. Another person hearing of this sends two asses, but is disappointed of his requital. This story was originally in the *Fabliaux*, and has been imitated in various forms in almost every language.

166. Is the first of a series of tales concerning cures performed in an extraordinary or comical manner. It is also from one of the *Fabliaux*, entitled *L' Arracheur de Dents*, (*Le Grand*, 2, 293,) where a tooth-drawer fastens one end of an iron wire to the tusk that is to be pulled out, and the other to an anvil; he then passes a red-hot iron before the nose of his patient, who, from the surprise, throws himself suddenly back, and by this jerk the tooth is extracted.

198. A blind beggar hides a hundred florins under a stone in a chapel, but, being observed by some one, his money is stolen. Having discovered his loss, he desires his son to place him next morning at the entrance of the church, and observe if any one going in should eye him in a peculiar manner. He is in consequence informed that a certain person, who was in fact the thief, had been very particular in his regards. To him the beggar straightway repairs, and tells him that he has a hundred florins concealed in the church, and a hundred more lent out, which are to be restored in eight days, and concludes with requesting, that he would lay out the whole for him to the best advantage. The thief, in hopes of being enabled to purloin all, replaces what he had stolen. There is a similar story in the *Arabian Nights*—14th Tale of Al-

phonsus—Le Grand, 3, 282—Gesta Romanorum, c. 118—Cento Novelle Antiche, N. 74.

206. A miller's wife substitutes herself for a woman with whom she discovered her husband had an assignation, and her spouse had previously agreed to share with a friend the favours he was to receive. This tale is taken, with little variation, from *Le Meunier d' Aleus* (Le Grand, 3, 292). The leading circumstances, however, have been told oftener than once in the *Fabliaux*, and have escaped the notice of few of the French or Italian novelists. They form the *Quinque ova* in the *Facetiae* of Poggio; the 9th of the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*; the 8th of the *Queen of Navarre*, and the *Quiproquo* of Fontaine.

207. This story is from a *fabliau*, entitled *La Culotte des Cordeliers* (Le Grand, 1, 299). It is there told, that a merchant's wife in Orleans had a clerk for a gallant. The husband came home one night unexpectedly. The clerk had time to escape, but left an essential article of dress behind him, which on the following morning the husband put on by mistake. Before evening he remarked the change in his clothes, and on his return home reproached his wife with her infidelity. Aware, however, of her perilous situation, she had applied, during her husband's absence, for a similar article of dress, at the monastery of St. Francis. She persuaded her spouse that she had procured what he then wore, for the purpose of transmitting his name to posterity; and, on inquiry, the husband of course found her declaration confirmed by the monks of St. Francis. In *Sacchetti* the lover is a friar, and at his request a monk goes to demand what the friar had left from the husband, as relics of St. Francis, which his wife had procured from the monastery. The story is in *Sabadino*, (p. 38), the *Facetiae* of Poggio, where it is the *Braccæ Divi Francisci*, and the *Novellino* of Massuccio, (3d of 1st part;) but in the last work the monks come to take back what they had lent, in solemn procession: Massuccio's tale has been versified in the *Novelle Galanti* of Casti, under title of *Brache di San Griffone*. Similar incidents are related in the *Apology for Herodotus*, by Henry Stephens, and in the *Jewish Spy*, where we are informed by the author in a note, that this adventure actu-

ally happened to a Jesuit in France. Of all these tales the origin may, perhaps, be a story in Apuleius, where a gallant is detected by the husband from having left his sandals. The lover afterwards accounts for their having been found in the house, by accusing the husband's slave, (with whom he was in collusion,) in presence of his master, of having stolen them from him at the public bath. The story of Apuleius is versified in the *Orlando Innamorato* (C. 55), but there a mantle is left by the gallant instead of sandals.

In chronological order, the novelist who comes next to Sacchetti, is *SER GIOVANNI*,\* a Florentine notary. His tales, as he mentions in a sonnet prefixed, were begun in 1378, and they were written at a village in the neighbourhood of Forli. They were not published, however, till 1558, at Milan. Those copies which bear the date of 1554, are in fact a subsequent edition with a false date, and no other impression, which was genuine and perfect, appeared till 1757. This work is entitled *Il Pecorone* (the Dunce), a title which the author assumed, as some Italian academicians styled themselves, *Insensati*, *Stolidi*, &c., appellations in which there was not always so much irony as they imagined.

In point of purity and elegance of style, *Ser Giovanni* is reckoned inferior only to Boccaccio; a number of his tales are also curious in a historical point of view, and correspond precisely with facts related by Giovanni Villani. Indeed, some have erroneously believed that this historian was the *Giovanni* who wrote the *Pecorone*.

Near the commencement of his work the novelist feigns that a young man of Florence, named Aurette, fell in love by report with a nun of a convent at Forli. With the design of having frequent opportunities of seeing her, Aurette repaired to Forli, and became a monk of the same order. He was soon appointed chaplain of the convent, and in that capacity had liberty of paying daily visits to his mistress. At length it is agreed, that at these interviews each should relate a tale. The work is accordingly divided into days, the number of which is twenty-

\* *IL PECORONE* di *Ser Giovanni Fiorentino*, nel quale si contengono cinquanta *Novelle Antiche*, belle d'invenzione e di stile.

five; each day contains two stories, and generally concludes with songs or amorous verses.

The first story of Ser Giovanni is one of the most beautiful triumphs of honour which has ever been recorded. Galgano, a young gentleman of Siena, becomes deeply enamoured of a lady named Donna Minoccia. After paying court to her a considerable time in vain, the lady is induced, by the wonderful eulogies accidentally given of him by Messer Stricca, her husband, to invite him to an interview during a journey of the latter to Perugia.—“Così sentendo Galgano che Messer Stricca era ito a Perugia, si mosse la sera a ora competente e andò a casa colei ch’ egli amava assai più che gli occhi suoi. E giunto nel cospetto della donna, con molta riverenza la salutò, dove la donna con molta feste lo prese per mano, e poi l’abbraccio, dicendo: ben venga il mio Galgano per cento volte; e senza più dire si donarono la pace più e più volte. E poi la donna fe venire confetti e vini, e bevuto e confettato ch’ ebbero insieme, la donna lo prese per mano e disse: Galgano mio, egli è tempo d’ andare a dormire, e però audianci a letto. Rispose Galgano e disse: Madonna, a ogni piacer vostro. Entrati che furono a camera, dopo molti belli e piacevoli ragionamenti, la donna si spogliò et entrò nel letto, e poi disse a Galgano: E mi pare che tu sia sì vorgognoso e sì temente; che hai tu? non ti piaccio io? no sei tu contento? non hai tu ciò che tu vuoi? Rispose Galgano: Madonna sì, e non mi potrebbe Iddio aver fatto maggior grazia, che ritrovarmi nelle braccia vostre: E così ragionando sopra questa materia, si spogliò, e entrò nell letto allato a colei, cui egli aveva tanto tempo desiderata. E poi che fu entrato le disse: Madonna, io voglio una grazia da voi, se vi piace. Disse la donna, Galgano mio, domanda; ma prima voglio che tu m’ abbracci, e così fe. Disse Galgano, Madonna, io mi maraviglio forte, come voi avete stasera mandato per me più che altre volte, avendovi io tanto tempo desiderata e seguita, e voi mai non voleste me vedere nè udire. Che v’ ha mosso hora? Rispose la Donna: Io te lo diro. Egli è vero che pochi giorni sono, che tu passasti con un tuo sparviere quinci oltre; di che il mio marito mostro che ti vedesse e che t’ invitasse a cena, e tu non volesti venire. All ora il tuo sparviere volò dietro a



una Gazza ; e io veggendolo così bene schermire con lei, domandai il mio marito, di qui egli era ; onde egli mi rispose ch' egli era del più virtuoso giovane di Siena e ch' egli aveva bene a cui somigliare ; però ch' e' non vide mai nessuno compiuto quanto eri tu in ogni cosa. E sopra questo mi ti lodò molto, onde io udendoti lodare a quel modo, e sapendo il bene che tu mi avevi voluto, posemi in cuore di mandare per te, e di non t'esser più cruda ; e questa è la cagione. Rispose Galgano : è questo vero ? Disse la donna : certo sì. Hacci nessuna altra cagione ? Rispose la Donna—No. Veramente, disse Galgano, non piaccia a Dio, nè voglia, poi che 'l vostro marito m' ha fatto e detto di me tanta cortesia, ch' io usi a lui villania. E subito si gittò fuori del letto, e rivestissi e prese commiato dalla donna, e andossi con Dio ; ne mai più guardò quella donna per quello affare, e a messer Stricca portò sempre singolarissimo amore e riverenza."

1. 2. A student of Bologna requests his master to instruct him in the science of love. The learned doctor directs him to repair to the church of the Frati Minori, to observe the ladies who assembled there, and report to him by whose beauty he is chiefly captivated. It happens that the scholar is smitten with the charms of his master's wife, of whose attractions he gives him a rapturous description ; but neither the teacher nor pupil are aware of the person on whom the doctor's lessons are practised. The student from time to time reports to his preceptor the successful progress of his suit, which he carries on entirely according to his instructions. At length, however, the doctor's suspicions being awakened, he enters his own house at the time his pupil had mentioned as the hour of rendezvous with his mistress. When the lady heard him at the door she concealed her lover under a heap of half-dried linen. The husband having made search through the house, believes at length that his suspicions were groundless. Next day, however, the young man, who was still unconscious of the strong interest which his master took in the occurrence, related to him the alarm he had received from the husband of his mistress, and the whole story of his concealment.

This tale, which also occurs in the Nights of Straparola

(4. of the 4.), is probably of Eastern origin, as it resembles the story of the Second Traveller, in the *Bahar-Danush*, a work compiled from the most ancient Brahmin traditions. But whatever may be its origin, the story of Ser Giovanni is curious, as being the foundation of those scenes of Shakspeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor* where Falstaff reports to Mr. Ford under the name of Brooke, the progress of his suit with Mrs. Ford, and the various contrivances by which he escaped from the search of the jealous husband, one of which was being carried out of the house concealed in a heap of foul linen. Shakspeare derived these incidents through the medium of the collection entitled *The Fortunate, Deceived, and Unfortunate Lovers*, of which the first tale is a translation of Ser Giovanni; he may also have looked at the story of the *Two Lovers of Pisa*, related in *Tarleton's Newes out of Purgatorie*, where the incidents are related according to Straparola's version of the story. Our great dramatist, however, has given a different turn to the incidents, by the ludicrous character of Falstaff, and by the assignations of the lady being merely devices to expose him to ridicule. Moliere, too, has formed on this tale his comedy *L'Ecole des Femmes*, where the principal amusement arises from a gallant confiding the progress of his intrigue with a young lady to her guardian, who is on the eve of espousing his ward. It has also furnished the subject of another French play, called *Le Maître en Droit*, and has been imitated by Fontaine under the same title. Finally, it has suggested that part of *Gil Blas* where Don Raphael confides to Balthazar the progress of an amour with his wife, and particularly details the interruptions he met with from the unexpected arrival of the husband.

2. 1. A son, while on his death-bed, writes to his mother to send him a shirt made by the most happy woman in the city where she resided. The mother finds that the person whom she selects is utterly wretched, and is thus consoled for her own loss, as her son intended. This tale has given rise to the *Fruitless Enquiry, or Search after Happiness*, of Mrs. Heywood, one of the earliest of our English novelists. There a young man having disappeared, his mother in despair consulted a fortune-teller, who said that to pro-

cure his return she must get a shirt made for him by a woman completely contented. The consequent search introduces the relation of a number of stories, tending to show that no one is perfectly happy. These moral fictions are probably of eastern origin. Abulfaragius, the great Arabic historian, who lived in the 13th century, informs us that Iskender while dying, in order to console his mother, desired her to prepare a banquet for all those who till that moment had passed through life without experiencing affliction.

2. 2. Relates a revenge taken by a cavalier, for an alarm which his mistress had given him during an assignation. It is derived from the French Fabliau *Les Deux Changeurs* (Barbazan, vol. iii. p. 254), and has been imitated in *Bandello Straparola*, and the first tale of the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, entitled *La Medaille au Revers*.

3. 1. Describes manners which to us appear very singular and scandalous, but do not seem to have been considered in that light in the 14th century. That freedom with which Boccaccio has treated the church of Rome has excited much astonishment; but his tales are not more severe on the clergy than this and another story of *Ser Giovanni*, who seems in his religious politics to have been inimical to the establishment of the church at Avignon.

3. 2. Is the 7th of the 7th of the *Decameron*.

4. 1. Is a very singular but well-known story. A young man, named *Giannotto*, is adopted by *Ansaldo*, a rich Venetian merchant. He obtains permission to go to Alexandria, and sets sail in a ship richly laden. On his voyage he enters the port of Belmont, where a lady of great wealth resided, and who announced herself as the prize of any person who could enjoy her. *Giannotto* is entertained in her palace, and, having partaken of wine purposely mixed with soporific ingredients, he falls asleep on going to bed, and his vessel is confiscated next morning, according to the stipulated conditions. He returns to Venice, fits out another vessel for Belmont, and acts in a similar manner. The third time *Ansaldo* is forced to borrow ten thousand ducats from a Jew, on condition of his creditor being allowed to take a pound of flesh from his body if he does not pay by a certain time. *Giannotto's* expedition is now more fortunate, and he obtains the lady

in marriage by refraining from the wine, according to a hint he received from a waiting-maid. Occupied with his bride, he forgets the bond of Ansaldo till the day it is due; he then hastens to Venice, but as the period had elapsed, the Jew refuses to accept ten times the money. At this crisis the new-married lady arrives, disguised as a lawyer, and announces, as was the custom in Italy, that she had come to decide difficult cases; for in that age delicate points were not determined by the ordinary judges of the provinces, but by doctors of law, who were called from Bologna, and other places at a distance. The pretended lawyer being consulted on the claim of the Jew, decides that he is entitled to insist on the pound of flesh, but that he should be beheaded if he draw one drop of blood from his debtor. The judge then takes from Giannotto the marriage-ring as a fee, and afterwards banters him in her own character for having parted with it.

This story of the bond is of Eastern origin; it occurs in the Persian *Monshee*, and innumerable works which were written about the time of the *Pecorone*. The principal situation has been spun out in the adventures of *Almoradin*, related in the French story of *Abdallah*, the son of *Hanif*, and every one will recognise in this tale a part of the plot of *Shakspeare's Merchant of Venice*. It was transferred, however, into many publications intermediate between the *Pecorone* and the *Merchant of Venice*, by which it may have been suggested to the English dramatist. There was, in the first place, an old English play on this subject, entitled the *Jew*. It was also related in the English *Gesta Romanorum*, and the ballad of *Gernutus*, or the *Jew of Venice*. The incidents, however, in *Shakspeare* bear a much closer resemblance to the tale of *Ser Giovanni*, than either to the ballad or to the *Gesta Romanorum*. In the ballad there is nothing said of the residence at Belmont, nor the incident of the ring, as it is a judge, and not the lady who gives the decision. In the *Gesta* the lady is the daughter of the Emperor of Rome, and the pound of flesh is demanded from the borrower, without the introduction of a person bound for the principal debtor. There are some phrases, however, in the *Gesta*, which would lead us to think that *Shakspeare* had at least consulted that work.

“Conventionem meam,” says the Jew, “volo habere.” The probability is, that he compiled from some lost translation of the tale in the Pecorone, the Gesta Romanorum, and the ballad of Gernutus, and interwove all with the story of the caskets, in such a manner, as to render his plot more absurd than the incidents of any one of his originals. A story somewhat similar is told by Gregorio Leti, in his Life of Sixtus V.; but there a Jew offers a pound of his flesh as security to a merchant, whose property in Hispaniola he had insured. It also occurs in a work of the Spanish Jesuit, Gracian.

4. 2. Story of an old French count, who obtains a young bride by employing one of the king’s squires, who overthrows all the count’s rivals in a tournament, and afterwards allows himself to be vanquished by the infirm and aged suitor. After the death of the old count the young squire obtains the widow, who is represented as holding a very curious conversation with her father, copied from the 15th tale of Sacchetti. See also the Excusatio Sterilitatis in Poggio’s Facetiae.

5. 2. Is from the 9th of the 9th day of the Decameron.

6. 1. In the 13th century there were two celebrated theologians in the university of Paris, who had frequent disputations. The one was called Messer Alano, and the other Pierre: the former was a zealous catholic, but the latter was suspected of heretical opinions. Alano having made a journey to Rome, and being shocked with the wickedness that there prevailed, offered himself as a servant to a rigid order of monks on the Appenine mountains. Here he remained a considerable time, employed in menial offices, and regarded as almost an idiot by the brethren. Meanwhile, through his absence, the tenets of Peter gained ground in the university of Paris, and at length this heretic proceeded to Rome, to maintain heterodox propositions in the consistory. A council was convoked, which all the bishops and abbots in Italy were invited to attend. At his earnest request, Alano was carried to Rome to see the pope, by the abbot of the monastery to which he had retired, and being a man of diminutive stature, was brought into the council concealed under the robes of his superior. Peter, by his imposing

appearance and thundering eloquence, daunted his opponents, and deterred them from reply ; but after a pause, Alano started out between the legs of the abbot, and confuted, in an elegant Latin oration, the heretical doctrines of his former adversary. This Messer Alano, I suppose, was Alain de L'Isle, a celebrated theologian of the university of Paris, who lived in the 13th century, and was distinguished by the appellation of Doctor Universalis. Among his works, a catalogue of which is given by Fabricius, there exists—*Commentaria sive septem libri explanationum in Divinationes Propheticas Merlini Caledonii*, a Galfredo Monemutensi Latino carmine redditas e Britanico ; Francfurti, 1608, 8vo.

1. & 2. of 7. Contain the blackest and most dreadful examples of Italian jealousy. In the first the husband invites the relations of his wife and of his wife's lover to an entertainment, and has them all beaten to death by his domestics. The lady is afterwards tied to the dead body of her lover, and is thus left by her husband till she expires. "Fu questa crudelta," says the author, "da certi lodata, e da certi biasimata ; ma nessuno ardiva aprir la bocca, considerato ch'era grand'uomo in Roma."

8. 1. Origin of the factions of Guelphs and Ghibellines : two German lords of the name of Guelfe and Gibelin, having quarrelled about a hound in the 13th century, commenced a bloody war. Each was joined by his adherents : the former obtained the protection of the pope, the latter that of the emperor. Their quarrel passed into Italy from one of the Guelph faction having broken a promise of marriage to a lady, whose family in consequence leagued itself with the Ghibellines ; the dissension thence spread all over Italy. The Guelphs ruled some time in Florence, but were expelled from it by their foes in 1260.

8. 2. A deceit practised on the public of Florence by the Ghibellines, during their banishment, which leads to their return, and the expulsion of the Guelphs.

9. 1. The doge of Venice employed an architect, called Bindo, to erect a building which should contain all the treasure of the republic, and should be inaccessible to depredators. This ingenious artist reserved a moveable stone in a part of the wall, in order that he might himself



enter when he found convenient. He and his son having soon after fallen into great poverty, they one night obtained access by this secret opening, and abstracted a golden vase. The loss was some time after remarked by the doge, while exhibiting the treasury to a stranger. In order to discover the fraud, he closed the doors, ordered some straw to be burned in the interior of the building, and found out the concealed entrance by the egress of the smoke. Conjecturing that the robber must pass this way, and that he would probably return, he placed at the bottom of this part of the wall a caldron filled with pitch, which was constantly kept boiling. Bindo and his son were soon forced by poverty to have recourse to their former means of supply. The father fell up to the neck in the caldron, and finding that death was inevitable, he called to his son to cut off his head, and throw it where it could not be found, in order to prevent further discovery. Having executed this command, the young man returned home, and informed his neighbours that his father had gone on a long journey, but he was obliged to communicate the truth to his mother, whose affliction now became the chief cause of embarrassment: for the doge perceiving that the robber must have had associates, ordered the skeleton to be hung upon a gibbet, in the expectation that it would be claimed. This spectacle being observed from her house, by his widow, her cries brought up the guard, and her son was obliged, on hearing them approach, to wound himself on the hand, to afford a reasonable pretext for her exclamations. She next insisted that her son should carry off the skeleton from the gibbet. He accordingly purchased twelve habits of black monks, in which he equipped twelve porters whom he had hired for the purpose. Having then disguised himself with a vizard, and mounted a horse covered with black cloth, he bore off the body spite of the guards and spies by whom it was surrounded, and who reported to the doge that it had been conveyed away by demons. The story then relates other means to which the doge resorted, all of which are defeated by the ingenuity of the robber. At length the curiosity of the doge is so much excited, that he offers the hand of his daughter to any one who will discover the transaction.

On this the young man reveals the whole, and receives the promised bride in return.

This story is as old as Herodotus, who tells it of a king of Egypt and his architect. There is some slight variation in the incidents of the Pecorone; but Bandello (Par. 1, N. 25) has adhered closely to the Greek original. In both an architect employed by a king of Egypt leaves a stone in the walls of the treasury, which can be removed at pleasure. At his death he bequeaths the knowledge of this secret as a legacy to his two sons; after this the stories correspond with the Pecorone, except that one of the brothers is caught in a net, in place of falling into a caldron, and the body when hung up is removed by the surviving brother intoxicating the guards. What is related by other Greek writers concerning the brothers Agamedes and Trophonius, who were architects employed by Grecian kings to build palaces, corresponds with the story of Herodotus. The father murdered by his son in the Seven Wise Masters is a similar story, as also that of Berinus, in a very old French romance, entitled *L' Histoire du Chevalier Berinus*. In this last work it is the treasury of Philip, a Roman emperor, that is broken into. In order to discover the robber, that monarch exposes his daughter to public prostitution, in expectation that she may extract the secret in the hour of dalliance. Berinus reveals the theft, and the lady, that she may distinguish him in the morning, makes an indelible black mark on his face. Berinus does the same to the other knights, but his mark alone is found to be the size of the princess's thumb. This romance, of which the MS. is extremely old, is the original of the Merchant's Second Tale, or Story of Beryn, sometimes published with Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. The first half of the story, however, concerning the treasury, has not been adopted by the English poet, or, at least, is not in that part of his tale which is preserved.

9. 2. The son of the Emperor of Germany runs off with the daughter of the King of Arragon, which occasions a long war between these two powers.

10. 1. Story of the Princess Denise of France, who, to avoid a disagreeable marriage with an old German prince, escapes in disguise to England, and is there received in a

convent. The king passing that way, falls in love with and espouses her. Afterwards, while he was engaged in a war in Scotland, his wife brings forth twins; but the queen-mother sends to acquaint her son that his spouse had given birth to two monsters. In place of his majesty's answer, ordering them to be nevertheless brought up with the utmost care, she substitutes a mandate for their destruction, and also for that of the queen. The person to whom the execution of this command is entrusted, allows the queen to depart with her twins to Genoa. At the end of some years she discovers her husband at Rome, on his way to a crusade; she there presents him with his children, and is brought back with them in triumph to England.

The principal part of Chaucer's *Man of Lawes Tale* is taken from this story. There Custance the daughter of the Emperor of Rome, is married to an eastern soldan. After the death of this monarch, Custance flies to England, where she is received into the house of a constable of Northumberland. She is accused by a rejected lover of the murder of the constable's wife, but is saved by a miraculous interposition of Providence, and married to the King of England. After this the stories correspond precisely. Tyrwhitt, who does not seem to have been aware of the existence of the novel in the *Pecorone*, says, "that Chaucer had his *Man of Lawes Tale* from Gower's *Confessio Amantis*." To Gower he thinks it came from an old English rhyme, entitled *Emaré* which professes to be taken from a Breton lay. But Mr. Ritson, by whom *Emaré* has been published, thinks that its primary source is the legendary life of Offa, king of the West Angles, attributed to Matthew Paris. In *Emaré*, the heroine who bears that name is exposed on the sea in a boat, on account of her refusing to comply with the incestuous proposals of her father. She is driven on the coast of Wales, and married to the king of that country. The story then corresponds with the *Pecorone*, except, that in the conclusion, the son of *Emaré* serves the king as a cupbearer. While acting in this capacity, the monarch discovers him to be his child, and in consequence finds out his queen whom he had lost. This is also the story of the knight's plot in

the English *Gesta Romanorum*. It is the subject, too, of a very old French romance, published in 4to, without date, entitled *Le Roman de la Belle Helene de Constantinople*. There, as in *Emaré* the heroine escapes to England to avoid a marriage with her father the King of Constantinople. The story then proceeds as in the other versions. At length she is ordered to be burnt, but is saved by the Duke of Gloucester's niece kindly offering to personate her on that occasion. The romance is spun out by long details of the exploits of her husband against the Saracens, and she is finally discovered by him in France, on his way to the Holy Land. In these fictions the incidents are not very probable; but stories of wonderful adventure, miraculous interpositions, and discoveries, were less disgusting in old times than they have now become, not only because they were more likely to happen, but because the bounds of probability were then less known and ascertained.

The greater part of the remaining tales of the *Pecorone* are historical, and were furnished to the novelist, as he himself informs us, by his friends and contemporaries Giovanni and Matteo Villani, who have transmitted the most authentic chronicles of those early ages. Those stories that recount the dissensions of Florence, are strikingly illustrative of its situation, of the character of its principal inhabitants, and of the factions by which it was distracted. But the Italian chroniclers, though well acquainted with the transactions of their native cities and provinces, in their own times, possessed but inaccurate information concerning foreign countries. Accordingly, those tales which relate to the affairs of other nations, are merely curious as exhibiting in some degree the nature of the historical opinions, propagated and believed in the 14th century.

Thus, in the 2d of the 19th day, it is related, that William of Normandy got possession of the throne of England, having vanquished Taul, the king of the island, in a great battle. After him reigned his son William, and his second son Henry, who slew the blessed Thomas of Canterbury, because he reproved him for his vices, and retaining the tithes of the church; on account of which

murder God wrought a great judgment on him, for as he was riding in Paris with King Lewis, a sow ran in between the feet of his horse, so that he was tumbled down, and the king died in consequence of the fall.\* Henry left his crown to his son Stephen. That monarch bequeathed it to a second Henry, who was followed by his son John. This prince was distinguished for his courtesy, (*questo re Giovanni fu il piu cortese signor del Mondo*), but dying without children, was succeeded by his brother Richard, &c. &c. I do not know how King John (unless it was by his dastardly submission to the pope,) obtained such high reputation in Italy; but the novels of that country, particularly the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, are full of instances of his generosity and courtesy.

The last tale contains the history of Charles, Count of Anjou, brother of St. Louis. This story occupies a fifth part of the whole work, and is by much too long to have been related at a stolen interview between a nun and an enamoured chaplain. In some of the MS. copies of the *Pecorone*, there is substituted for this historical novel an account of an intrigue carried on by a young man with a nun, and of the extraordinary punishment that remained to him after his death.

In no species of composition is the stagnation or degeneracy of national literature, which took place in Italy from the end of the 14th to the conclusion of the 15th century, more remarkable than in that with which we are now engaged. I know of no imitator of Boccaccio worthy to be mentioned in the course of that period: the twelve novels of Gentile Sermini of Sienna, and those of Fortini, both of whom lived during this interval, are totally uninteresting; yet in them we may trace the origin of our most ordinary jests, or, at least, a coincidence with them; thus, the 10th of Sermini is the story of one stammerer meeting another, and each supposing that his neighbour intends to ridicule him. In the 8th novel of Fortini, a countryman is persuaded at market, by the repeated as-

\* The Roman Catholics of the 14th century seem to have held this sow in the respect that the Jacobites did the *little gentleman in the velvet coat*, who raised the hillock over which the horse of King William stumbled.

severations of the bystanders, that the kids he had for sale were capons, and he disposes of them as such.

Subsequent to Ser Giovanni, the first novelist deserving of notice is MASSUCCIO DI SALERNO,\* who flourished about 1470. The date of the composition of his tales, at least, cannot be placed earlier, as he mentions in one of his stories the capture of Arzilla, which happened in that year. Of the circumstances of the life of this novelist, the little that may be known can only be gathered from his writings. He was a Neapolitan by birth, and a man of some rank and family: he seldom resided, however, in his own country, the greater part of his life having been spent in the service of the dukes of Milan. In his Prooemium he asserts the truth of his stories more vehemently than usual. "Invoco," says the author, "l'altissimo Dio per testimonio che tutte son verisimile historie; e le piu negli nostri moderni tempi avvenute." It is pretended, in the same part of his work, that he had tried to imitate the language and idiom of Boccaccio; an attempt, however laudable, in which he has been extremely unsuccessful, as his style is corrupted by the frequent use of the Neapolitan dialect, and his sentences are often strangely inverted. The tales of Massuccio, however, are more original than those of most Italian novelists, few being borrowed from Boccaccio, or even from the Fabliaux. Whatever may be the merit of Massuccio, if we may judge from the number of editions, he has been, next to the father of Tuscan prose, the most popular of all the authors of this class. His novels were first published at Naples, folio, 1476; afterwards at Venice, 1484; again in 1492, without date of place; there was a 4to. edition in 1522, and three in 8vo, 1525, 1531, 1535, all at Venice. A subsequent Venetian edition, 1541, and one printed at Naples about the same time, have been much mutilated and corrected, on account of the satire and reflections on monks and ecclesiastics, of which the tales of Massuccio are full; indeed, the professed object of the work, as the author declares, is to expose "la guasta vita de finti Religiosi."

The tales of Massuccio are divided into five parts, in

\* Il Novellino: nel quale si contengono cinquanta Novelle.



each of which, at least in the three first, he seems to have had in view some particular maxim, which he meant to establish or illustrate. In the first part, which contains ten novels, the scope of the stories is to show that God will, sooner or later, inflict vengeance on dissolute monks, who in these tales are generally brought to shame from being detected at a rendezvous. The first in this division is the story of a monk killed by a jealous husband, on account of an affair of gallantry. In this tale the amusement consists in the schemes devised for getting rid of the dead body. The husband places it in an appendage to a monastery, where it was sure to be early discovered: it is there found by the prior, who carries it to the door of the murderer, and, after some other adventures, it is finally tied to a young and unbroken horse. A lance is placed in the hand, and a shield tied round the neck. Those on the street, recognising the monk, believe him to be mad, and attribute his death to the colt falling with him into a well. The origin of this tale is the fabliau entitled *Le Sacristain de Cluni* (*Le Grand*, iv. 252,) or the thirty-first chapter of the English *Gesta Romanorum*. Strange as it may appear, this was a favourite tale both in France and England, and has been imitated by almost every novelist, and in all the languages of Europe.

The principal object of the second part is to prove that the monks of those days invented many frauds to draw money from the credulous, and that in return they were often cozened by laymen. Thus, two Neapolitan sharpers had stolen a purse from a Genoese merchant. Having despoiled the unfortunate man, they arrived at Sienna, where the good St. Bernardin was preaching with all possible effect and edification. One of the cheats addressed the holy man with a hypocritical air. "My reverend father," said he, "I am poor but honest: I have a very timorous and delicate conscience; here is a purse which some one has lost and I have found. I would give a great deal, if I had aught, to discover the owner, in order to restore it to him, but my honesty is all my property. I pray you to announce in your first discourse that if any one has lost this purse he may reclaim it; you can restore it to him, for I place it in your hands." The priest, as requested,

made known the matter in his next sermon. On this the accomplice of the knave presented himself, as had been agreed on with his comrade, and claimed the purse. As he detailed exactly what it contained, his right to it was not doubted, and the priest gave it to him with a strong recommendation to bestow a part on the honest man who had restored it ; but the pretended owner declared he could not afford to part with any thing, and left the church, carrying the purse along with him. The saint believing that the conscientious finder remained in want, solicited for him the charity of the congregation ; every one was eager to recompense him, and the subscription was so large, that next day, when the Genoese merchant arrived to claim his purse, the preacher and his congregation could bestow on him nothing but their benediction.

The fourteenth tale, however, is on a different topic from the former ones of the second part ; it is the story of a young gentleman of Messina, who becomes enamoured of the daughter of a rich Neapolitan miser. As the father kept his child perpetually shut up, the lover has recourse to stratagem. Pretending to set out on a long journey, he deposits with the miser a number of valuable effects, leaving, among other things, a female slave, who prepossesses the mind of the girl in favour of her master, and finally assists in the elopement of the young lady, and the robbery of her father's jewels, which she carries along with her. It has already been shown that the stories of the bond and of the caskets in the Merchant of Venice were borrowed from Italian novels, nor is it improbable that the avaricious father in this tale, the daughter so carefully shut up, the elopement of the lovers managed by the intervention of a servant, the robbery of the father, and his grief on the discovery, which is represented as divided between the loss of his daughter and ducats, may have suggested the third plot in Shakspeare's drama—the love and elopement of Jessica and Lorenzo.

The third book, which, like the preceding ones, consists of ten stories, is intended to show that the greatest and finest ladies of Italy, in the author's time, indulged in galantries of a nature which did them very little honour

indeed. Of these tales, the heroes are, for the most part, grooms, negroes, and muleteers.

In the twenty following stories of Massuccio there are related love adventures, which have sometimes a fortunate and sometimes a disastrous issue, and which are conducted to their termination by means occasionally ingenious, but always unlikely or incredible.

41. Is the story of two brothers from France, who, during their residence at Florence, fell in love with two sisters of that city. One of these sisters, though married, makes an assignation with her lover, and while she remains with him during night his brother is sent to lie down by the husband, that the blank may not be perceived. Daylight approaches without any prospect of his being relieved from this uncomfortable and precarious situation. At length the whole family bursts in with lights, when he is informed that the husband is from home, and is much tantalized on discovering that he has passed the night with the unmarried sister of whom he was enamoured. I have mentioned this story as it has been copied in one of the novels of Scarron—*La Precaution inutile*. It is also the second novel of Parabosco, and it is, perhaps, more probable that Scarron borrowed from him than from Massuccio, because in Parabosco, as in the French tale, the scene is laid in Spain, and not in Italy. It also suggested the incidents of one of the *Novelas Exemplares* of Cervantes, the story of Don Lewis de Castro and Rodrigo de Montalvo, in *Guzman d'Alfarache*, (Part ii. c. 4,) and the plot of the *Little French Lawyer* in Beaumont and Fletcher, which, next to *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*, is generally considered as the best of their comedies.

45. A Castilian scholar, passing through Avignon to Bologna, bribes the good-will of a lady of some rank at the former place. He grievously repents the price he had paid, and farther prosecuting his journey towards Italy, meets at an inn with the lady's husband, who was returning to France. This gentleman inquires the cause of his distress; and the scholar, after some hesitation, not knowing who he is, informs him of his adventure at Avignon, and the name of the lady who was concerned in it. The

husband, with much entreaty, prevails on his new-acquired friend to return to Avignon, where he is not a little disconcerted at being conducted to sup at a house which he had so much cause to remember. After a splendid entertainment, the husband upbraids his wife with her conduct, compels her to return the ill-gained money to the scholar, dismisses him with much civility, and afterwards secretly poisons his wife. Part of this story has probably been suggested by the 2d of the first day of the Pecorone. (See above, p. 78.)

The origin of Shakspeare's *Romeo and Juliet* has generally been referred to the *Giuletta* of Luigi da Porto. This tale Mr. Douce has attempted to trace as far back as the Greek romance by Xenophon Ephesius; but when it is considered that this work was not published in the lifetime of Luigi da Porto, I do not think the resemblance so strong as to induce us to believe that it was seen by that novelist. His *Giuletta* is evidently borrowed from the 33d novel of Massuccio, which must unquestionably be regarded as the ultimate origin of the celebrated drama of Shakspeare, though it has escaped, as far as I know, the notice of his numerous commentators. In the story of Massuccio, a young gentleman, who resided in Sienna, is privately married by a friar to a lady of the same place, of whom he was deeply enamoured. Mariotto, the husband, is forced to fly from his country, on account of having killed one of his fellow-citizens in a squabble on the streets. An interview takes place between him and his wife before the separation. After the departure of Mariotto, Giannozza, the bride, is pressed by her friends to marry: she discloses her perplexing situation to the friar, by whom the nuptial ceremony had been performed. He gives her a soporific powder, which she drinks dissolved in water; and the effect of this narcotic is so strong that she is believed to be dead by her friends, and interred according to custom. The accounts of her death reach her husband in Alexandria, whither he had fled, before the arrival of a special messenger, who had been despatched by the friar to acquaint him with the real posture of affairs. Mariotto forthwith returns in despair to his own country, and proceeds to lament over the tomb of

his bride. Before this time she had recovered from her lethargy, and had set out for Alexandria in quest of her husband, who meanwhile is apprehended and executed for the murder he had formerly committed. Giansozza, finding he was not in Egypt, returns to Sienna, and learning his unhappy fate, retires to a convent, where she soon after dies. The catastrophe here is different from the novel of Luigi da Porto and the drama of Shakspeare, but there is a perfect correspondence in the preliminary incidents. The tale of Massuccio was written about 1470, which was long prior to the age of Luigi da Porto, who died in 1531, or of Cardinal Bembo, to whom some have attributed the greater part of the composition. Nor was it published till some years after the death of Luigi, having been first printed at Venice in 1535. It afterwards appeared in 1539, and lastly at Vicenza, 1731, 4to. These different editions vary as to some trifling incidents, but in all the principal circumstances, except those of the catastrophe, the novel of Luigi da Porto coincides with that of Massuccio. In the dedication Luigi says, that while serving as a soldier in Frank, the tale was related to him by one of his archers (who always attended him) to beguile the solitary road that leads from Gradisca to Udino. In this story the lovers are privately married by a friar. Romeo is obliged to fly on account of the murder of a Capulet. After his departure the bride's relations insist on giving her in marriage. She drinks a soporific powder dissolved in water, and is subsequently buried. The news of her death comes to Romeo before the messenger sent by the friar. He hastens to the tomb of Gioletta, and there poisons himself; she awakens from her trance before his death: he soon after expires, and Gioletta dies of grief. It is said in Johnson's Shakspeare, that this story is related as a true one in Girolamo de la Corte's History of Verona. It is also told as a matter of fact in the ninth of the second part of *Bandello*, which corresponds precisely with the tale of Luigi da Porto. *Bandello's* novel is dedicated to the celebrated Fracastoro, and the incident is said to have happened in the time of Bartolommeo de la Scala. Luigi da Grotto, surnamed the Cieco d'Adria, one of the early romantic poets of Italy, who wrote a drama



on this subject, declares, that his plot was founded on the ancient annals of his country. In his drama the Princess of Adria is in love with Latinus, who was the son of her father's bitterest enemy, and had slain her brother in battle. The princess is offered in marriage to the King of the Sabines: in this distress she consults a magician, who administers an opiate. She is soon after found apparently dead, and her body is deposited in the royal sepulchre. Latinus, hearing of her decease, poisons himself, and comes in the agonies of death to the tomb of the princess. She awakens, and a tender scene ensues—the lover expires in the arms of his mistress, who immediately stabs herself. In this play there is a garrulous old nurse, and it appears, from the coincidence of several passages pointed out by Mr. Walker in his *Memoir on Italian Tragedy*, that the drama of Luigi da Groto must have been seen by Shakspeare. The story of Romeo and Juliet, which was thus popular and prevalent in Italy, passed at an early period into France. It was told in the introduction to a French translation of Boccaccio's *Philocopo* by Adrien Sevin, published in 1542, and is there related of two Slavonians who resided in the Morea. The lover kills his mistress's brother: he is forced to fly, but promises to return and run off with her: she meanwhile persuades a friar to give her a soporific potion for the convenience of elopement. A vessel is procured by the lover, but, not knowing the lady's part of the stratagem, he is struck with despair at beholding her funeral on landing. He follows the procession to the place of interment, and there stabs himself; when his mistress awakens she stabs herself also. From Bandello the tale was transferred into the collection of tragic stories by Belleforest, and published at Lyons, 1564. In this country it was inserted in Paynter's *Palace of Pleasure*, but it was from the metrical history of *Romeus and Giuliet* that Shakspeare chiefly borrowed his plot, as has been shown by many minute points of resemblance. It was by this composition that he was so wretchedly misled in his catastrophe, as to omit the incident of Juliet being roused before the death of her husband, which is the only novel and affecting circumstance in the tale of Luigi da Porto, and the only one in which he has excelled



Massuccio. From the garbled and corrupt translations to which he had recourse, the English dramatist has seldom improved on the incidents of the Italian novels. His embellishments consist in the beauty and justness of his sentiments, and the magic of his language.

Besides the *Romeo and Juliet* of Shakspeare, and the Italian play already mentioned, there are two Spanish dramas on the subject of *Romeo and Juliet*; one by Fernando Roxas, who was contemporary with Shakspeare, and the other by the celebrated Lopez de Vega. The former coincides precisely with *Romeo and Juliet*; in the latter, the names are changed, and the catastrophe is totally different. Thus the lover, who corresponds to *Romeo*, comes to lament at the tomb of his mistress, but without having taken poison, and the lady having recovered from the effects of the soporific draught, they fly to an old uninhabited chateau belonging to her father, which he seldom visited. Meanwhile the father resolves to console himself for the loss of his daughter by entering into a second marriage, and goes to celebrate the nuptial festival at the castle where the lovers had sought refuge. On his first arrival he beholds his daughter, and supposing her to be a spirit, he is struck with remorse. The lady aids the deception, reproaches him as the cause of her death, and declares that he can only obtain pardon by reconciling himself to her injured lover. On his sudden appearance the old man declares, that were his daughter yet alive, he would willingly bestow her on him in marriage; and the fond pair embrace this favourable opportunity of throwing themselves at the feet of the father, to claim fulfilment of his promise.

SABADINO DELLI ARIENTI,\* who comes next to Massuccio in the chronological order of Italian novelists, was a citizen of Bologna, and a man of some note in his own district. He is said to have been a great classical scholar, and to have written a valuable history of his native city. His tales, which are dedicated to Duke Hercules of Fer-

\* *Le Porrettane, dove si tratta di settantuna Novelle, con amorosissimi documenti e dichiarazione dell'anima; con una disputa e sentenza chi debba tenere il primo luogo il Dottore, o il Cavaliere, &c.*

rara, are entitled *Le Porrettane*, because, as the author informs us, they were written for the amusement of the ladies and gentlemen who one season attended the baths of Porretta in the vicinity of Bologna. The date of the composition of these stories is supposed to be nearly the same with that of the first edition, which was published in 1483 at Bologna: since that time there have been four or five impressions, the latest of which is earlier than the middle of the 16th century. Of the seventy-one novels which this author has written, some describe tragical events, but the greater number are light and pleasant adventures, or merely repartees and *bon-mots*. All of them are written in a style which is accounted barbarous, being full of Lombard phrases and expressions.

The fourth of Sabadino is from the eighth of Petrus Alphonsus, where a vine-dresser's wife is engaged with a gallant while her husband works in his vineyard. The husband returns, having wounded one eye, but the woman, by kissing him on the other, contrives her lover's escape. This is the forty-fourth of Malespini, twenty-third of *Bandello*, and sixteenth of the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*. It also occurs in the *Arcadia di Brenta*, (p. 131); the *Contes du Sieur d'Ouville*, &c. &c.

20. Is a tolerable story of a knavish citizen of Araldo, who borrows twenty ducats from a notary. As the citizen refused to pay at the time he promised, and as no evidence existed of the loan, he is summoned, at the solicitation of the notary, to be examined before the Podestà. He alleges to his creditor, as an excuse for not appearing, that his clothes are in pawn, an obstacle which the notary removes by lending him his cloak. Thus equipped he proceeds to the hall of justice, and is examined apart from his creditor by the magistrate. He positively denies the debt, and attributes the charge to a strange whim which had lately seized the notary, of thinking every thing his own property: "For instance," continues he, "if you ask him whose mantle this is that I wear, he will instantly lay claim to it." The notary being called in and questioned, answers of course as his debtor foretold, and is, in consequence, accounted a madman by all who are present. The judge orders the poor man to be taken care of, and

the defendant is allowed to retain both the ducats and mantle.

59. A gentleman of the illustrious family of Bolognini in Italy, entered into the service of Ladislaus, King of Sicily, and became a great favourite of his master. Being his huntsman, falconer, and groom, besides prime minister, he met with many accidents in the course of his employments: one day his eye was struck out by a branch of a tree, and on another occasion he was rendered lame for the rest of his life by falling over a precipice. His address, however, remained, and his knowledge of the art of succeeding in a court. On one occasion, while following Ladislaus to Naples, the bark in which he sailed was separated in a storm from the king's vessel, and seized by corsairs, who carried him to Barbary, and disposed of him to certain Arabians. By them he was conveyed to the most remote part of their deserts, and sold, under the name of Eliseo, to an idolatrous monarch in that region. At first he kept his master's camels, but rose by degrees to be his vizier and favourite. He filled this situation a long time, but at length the king died. It was the custom of the country, on an occasion of that sort, to cut the throats of all those who had discharged high employments about the person of the monarch, and inter them along with their master. Eliseo, of course, was an indispensable character at this ceremony. In an assembly of the great council and people, which was held preparatory to its celebration, he thus addressed them:—"My lords and gentlemen, I would esteem myself too happy to follow my master to the other world, but you perceive that being blind and lame, and of a delicate constitution, I cannot render him services so effectual as some other lords and gentlemen present, who are strong and well-made, and who, besides, having the use of their limbs, will reach him much earlier than I can. I am only fit for conversation, and to bring him the news of the state. After the funeral ceremonies, in which the great officers of his deceased majesty will readily officiate, you will choose a king. I had best postpone my departure till the election is over, and bear the respects of the new sovereign to his predecessor." He then enlarged on the qualities which their future monarch

should possess, and said such fine and popular things on this subject, that he not only obtained the respite he solicited, but was unanimously chosen king after the interment of the late sovereign and the officers of his household. Every nation has been fond of relating stories of the advancement of their countrymen in foreign lands by the force of talents. In this country, Turkey has generally been fixed on as the theatre of promotion. The above stories may perhaps appear dull to the reader; they are, nevertheless, a very favourable specimen of the merit and originality of Sabadino.

This author was the last of the Italian novelists who wrote in the 15th century, and AGNOLO FIRENZUOLA is the first of the succeeding age. The writer was an inhabitant of Florence, and an abbot of Vallombrosa; but his novels, which are ten in number, are not such as might be expected from his clerical situation. Most of them are interwoven in his *Ragionamenti*, printed at Florence, 1548. He tells us that a mistress, who lived with him, intended *tessere ragionamenti*, but that she died of a fever before she could execute this design, which, while on her death-bed, she solicited him to accomplish. This story is probably feigned, but it seems a singular fiction for an ecclesiastic.

The first tale of Firenzuola, is one that has become very common in modern novels and romance. A young man being shipwrecked on the coast of Barbary, is picked up by some fishermen, and sold to the Bashaw of Tunis. He there becomes a great favourite of his master, and still more of his mistress, whom he persuades not only to assist in his escape, but to accompany him in his flight. The seventh is a story repeated in many of the Italian novels. A person lays out a sum to be paid as the dowery of a young woman when she is married. The mother, in order to get hold of this money, comes to the benefactor, accompanied by her daughter, and a person who assumed the character of husband. The donor insists that the new-married couple should remain all night in his house, and assigns them the same apartment. Firenzuola had this story from the fourteenth of Fortini, and it has been imitated in the novels of Grazzini, called *Le Lasca* (Part 2,

N. 10). Most of the other tales of Firenzuola, in which the chief characters are nuns and monks, can hardly be extracted. They are all, however, accounted remarkable for that elegance of style which distinguishes the works of Firenzuola. These consist of two dialogues on beauty, a few comedies, and a free translation of the *Ass of Apuleius*.

About the same time with Firenzuola lived Luigi da Porto, whose novel has already been mentioned, and the celebrated Molza, who wrote a hundred novels, all of which have been lost except four, and none of them, while extant, obtained a reputation equal to his other works. Nearly at the same period in which Molza and Firenzuola flourished, GIOVANNI BREVIO, a Venetian canon of Ceneda, wrote six novels, which were accounted remarkable for the liveliness of their style. They were published at Rome along with his *Rime* in 1545, 8vo. The first is the story of a lady who brought a lover to her house during the absence of her husband, who, returning unexpectedly, is surprised at the preparations for a supper, and in the heat of resentment upbraids his wife, and throws every thing into confusion. Meanwhile the lover had fled unseen to the house of a neighbour, who, at his solicitation, came with him and reproached the husband for breaking up a party he was entertaining, and for whose accommodation the lady had favoured him with the loan of the house.

2. A priest extorts money by passing for a cardinal.

3. Is the story of a father ruined by the extravagance of children, who afterwards neglect him. He pretends he has found a treasure. They treat him well for the rest of his life, but find empty coffers at his death. It is difficult to understand what comfort the father could receive in the attention or caresses of such a family. This novel is the subject of Piron's comedy of the *Fils Ingrats*, afterwards published by him under the title of *L'Ecole des Peres*, the representation of which, in 1728, was the epoch of the revival of the *Comedie Larmoiante*. In the drama, however, the fiction of the treasure is invented by the father's valet, and entraps the young men into a restitution of the wealth they had obtained, in order to get the whole by

this proof of disinterested affection. The story is also in the *Pieuses Recreations d' Angelin Gazeé*, and is told in the *Colloquia Mensalia* of Luther, among other examples, to deter fathers from dividing their property during life among their children—a practice to which they are in general little addicted.

4. Is the renowned tale of Belfagor. This story, with merely a difference of names, was originally told in an old Latin MS., which is now lost, but which, till the period of the civil wars in France, remained in the library of Saint Martin de Tours. But whether Brevio or Machiavel first exhibited the tale in an Italian garb, has been a matter of dispute among the critics of their country. It was printed by Brevio during his life, and under his own name, in 1545; and with the name of Machiavel, in 1549, which was about eighteen years after that historian's death. Both writers probably borrowed the incidents from the Latin MS., for they could scarcely have copied from each other. The story is besides in the *Nights of Straparola*, but much mutilated; and has also been imitated by Fontaine. The following is the outline of the tale, as related by Machiavel. All the souls which found their way to hell, complained that they had been brought to that melancholy predicament by means of their wives: Minos and Rhadamanthus reported the case to Pluto, who summoned an infernal council to consult on the best mode of ascertaining the truth or falsehood of such statements. After some deliberation it was determined, that one of their number should be sent into the world, endowed with a human form, and subjected to human passions; that he should be ordered to choose a wife as early as possible, and after remaining above ground for ten years, should report to his infernal master the benefits and burdens of matrimony. Though this plan was unanimously approved, none of the fiends were disposed voluntarily to undertake the commission, but the lot at length fell on the arch-demon Belfagor. Having received the endowments of a handsome person, and abundant wealth, he settled in Florence under the name of Roderic of Castile, and gave out that he had acquired his fortune in the East. As he was a well-bred gentlemanlike demon, he found no difficulty



in being introduced to the first families of the place, and of obtaining in marriage a young woman of high rank and unblemished reputation. The expense of fine clothes and furniture, for which his wife had a taste, he did not grudge, but as her family were in indifferent circumstances, he was obliged to fit out her brothers for the Levant. His lady, too, being somewhat of a scold, no servant remained long with him, and all were of course more anxious to waste than save their master's substance. Finally, being disappointed in his hopes of obtaining remittances from his brothers-in-law, he is forced to escape from his creditors. During their pursuit he is for some time concealed by a peasant, whose fortune he promises to make in return. Having disclosed to him the secret of his real name and origin, he undertakes to possess the daughter of a rich citizen of Florence, and not to leave her till the peasant comes to her relief. As soon as the countryman hears of the young lady's possession, he repairs to her father's house, and promises to cure her by a certain form of exorcism. He then approaches the ear of the damsel; "Roderic," says he, "I am come, remember your promise." "I shall," whispers he; "and, to make you still richer, after leaving this girl, I shall possess the daughter of the King of Naples." The peasant obtains so much fame by this cure, that he is sent for to the Neapolitan princess, and receives a handsome reward for the expulsion of Belfagor. At his departure the demon reminds him that he has fulfilled his promise, and that he is now determined to effect his ruin. In prosecution of this plan he possesses the daughter of Lewis VII. of France, and, as he anticipated, the peasant is immediately sent for. A scene is here described, resembling that in the fabliau *Le Vilain Medecin*, and Moliere's *Medecin malgré lui*. The rustic was forcibly carried to the capital of France, and, on his arrival, he in vain represented that certain demons were so obdurate they could not be expelled. The king plainly stated, that he must either cure his daughter or be hanged. All his private entreaties being unable to prevail on Belfagor to dislodge, he had recourse to stratagem. He ordered a scaffold, with an altar to be erected, whither the princess was conducted,

and mass performed, all which preparations Belfagor treated with profound contempt. In the middle of the ceremonies, however, as had been previously arranged, a great band, with drums and trumpets, approached with much clamour on one side. "What is this?" said Belfagor. "O, my dear Roderic," answered the peasant, "there is your wife coming in search of you." At these words Belfagor leaped out of the princess, and descended to hell to confirm the statement, the truth of which he had been commissioned to ascertain.

The notion of this story is ingenious, and might have been productive of entertaining incident, had Belfagor been led, by his connubial connexion, from one crime to another. But Belfagor is only unfortunate, and in no respect guilty: nor did any thing occur during his abode on earth, that testified the power of woman in leading us to final condemnation. The story of the peasant, and the possession of the princesses, bears no reference to the original idea with which the tale commences, and has no connexion with the object of the infernal deputy's terrestrial sojourn.

This novel has suggested the plot of an old English comedy, called *Grim, the Collier of Croydon*, printed 1602: and also *Belphegor, or the Marriage of the Devil*, 1691.

GIROLAMO PARABOSCO,\* who lived about the year 1550, was a celebrated musician, and a poet like most of the other Italian novelists. Though born at Placentium, he passed the greater part of his life at Venice, where he acquired that intimate acquaintance with the manners of the inhabitants which is conspicuous in his work. His tales commence with an eulogy on that city, which he makes the theatre of their relation. He feigns that seventeen gentlemen, among whom were Peter Aretine, and Speron Speroni, agreed, according to a custom at Venice, to pass a few days in huts erected in the water, for the amusement of fishing, at a short distance from the city. The weather proving unfavourable for that diversion on their first arrival, they employed themselves with relating tales.

\* *Diporti di Girolamo Parabosco.*

This entertainment continued for three days, and as each gentleman tells a story, the whole number amounts to seventeen. These, intermixed with songs and reflections, were published first at Venice without date, and afterwards at the same place in 1552 and 1558. Some of these stories are tragical, and others comical. Though there were no ladies present, and Peter Aretine was of the party, the tales are less immoral than most imitations of Boccaccio. It is needless, however, to give any examples as they are of the same species with other Italian novels—had little influence on subsequent compositions, and possess no great interest or originality: thus the 2d of Parabosco coincides with the 41st of Massuccio; the 4th has been suggested by the 10th of the 4th day of Boccaccio; the 1st part of the 5th is from the Meunier d' Aleus, through the medium of the 106th of Sacchetti; the 2d part is from the 8th of the 8th day of the Decameron, &c. &c. There are nine stories in the first day of Parabosco, and seven in the second, which concludes with the discussion of four questions, as whether there is most pleasure in hope or enjoyment. In the third day there is only one tale, and the rest of the time is occupied with the relation of bon mots, which are methodically divided into the defensive, aggressive, &c. They are in general very indifferent: a musician playing in a brutal company, is told he is an Orpheus. A man performing on a lute asserts he had never learnt to play, and is desired to reserve his assurances for those who suppose he has. One boasted he knew a knave by sight, whence it is inferred by a person present, that he must have often studied his mirror, &c. &c. Though Parabosco has only left seventeen novels, it would appear that he had intended to favour the public with a hundred, which must have been nearly ready for publication from what he says in one of his letters.—“Spero fra pochi giorni mandar fuori Cento Novelle; diciassette delle quali per ora n' ho mandato in questi miei Diporti.”

MARCO CADEMOSTO DA LODI\* was an ecclesiastic, and lived in the Roman court during the pontificates of Leo X. and Clement VII., by both of whom he was patronised.

\* Lonetti ed altre rime, con alcune Novelle.

His six novels were printed at Rome in 1543, along with his *rime*, for he too was a poet, like the other Italian novelists. He informs us in his proœmium, that he had lost twenty-seven tales he had written during the sack of Rome, all of which were founded on fact: of the six that remain, the only one that is tolerable is that of an old man, who, by will, leaves his whole fortune to hospitals. An ancient and faithful servant of the family having learned the nature of this iniquitous testament, informs his master's sons. In the course of the night on which the old gentleman dies, he is removed to another room, and the domestic, in concert with the young men, lies down in his place; he then sends for a notary, and dictates a will in favour of his master's sons, bequeathing himself, to their no small disappointment, an enormous legacy.

We shall be detained but a short while with the remaining Italian novelists, as they have in a great measure only imitated their predecessors, and frequently indeed merely repeated, in different language, what had formerly been told.

The succeeding novelists are chiefly distinguished from those who had gone before them by more frequent employment of sanguinary incidents, and the introduction of scenes of incredible atrocity and accumulated horrors. None of their number have carried these to greater excess than GIOVANNI GIRALDI CINTHIO,\* author of the *Ecatommithi*, and the earliest of the remaining novelists, who, from their merit or popularity, are at all worthy of being mentioned. Cinthio was born at Ferrara, early in the sixteenth century; he was secretary to Hercules II., Duke of Ferrara, and was a scholar and poet of some eminence. His death happened in 1573, but farther notices concerning his life may be found in Barotti's *Defence of the Ferrarese Authors against the Censure of Fontanini*. It would appear from an address with which he concludes, that his tales had been written at an early period of life, and retouched after a long interval:—

Poscia ch' a te, lavor de miei primi anni,  
Accio c' habbia nel duol qualche ristoro,  
Mi chiaman nell' età grave gli affanni, &c.

\* *Hecatommithi*, ovvero Cento Novelle di Giraldi Cinthio.

And again,

Dunque se stata sei gran tempo occolta,  
O de miei giovenili anni fatica,  
In cui studio già posi, e cura molta.

The novels of Cinthio were first printed in 1565, at Montreal, in Sicily, 2 vols. 8vo.; afterwards at Venice, 1566; and thirdly, at the same place, in 1574. Though the title of Hecatommithi imports, that the book contains a hundred tales, it in fact consists of a hundred and ten: as there are ten stories in the introduction which precedes the first decade. The whole work is divided into two parts, each of which includes five decades, and every decade, as the name implies, comprehends ten stories.

The introduction contains examples of the happiness of connubial, and the miseries of illicit love. The 1st decade is miscellaneous; 2. Histories of amours carried on in opposition to the will of relatives or superiors; 3. Of the infidelity of wives and husbands; 4. Of those who, laying snares for others, accomplish their own ruin; 5. Examples of connubial fidelity in trying circumstances; 6. Acts of generosity and courtesy; 7. Bon mots and sayings; 8. Examples of ingratitude; 9. Remarkable vicissitudes of fortune; 10. *Atti di Cavalleria*.

Cinthio deduces the relation of these multifarious tales from the sack of Rome in 1527. He feigns, that on account of the confusion and pestilence by which that event was followed, ten ladies and gentlemen sailed for Marseilles, and, during the voyage, related stories for each other's entertainment. Thus, in many external circumstances, Cinthio has imitated Boccaccio: as in the escape from the pestilence, which is the cause of the relation of many Italian novels—the number of the tales—the Greek appellation bestowed on them, and the limitation to a particular subject during each day. In the tales, however, little resemblance can be traced. The style of Cinthio is laboured, while extravagance and improbability are the chief characteristics of his incidents. It is asserted, in a preface to the third edition of the Ecatommithi, that all the stories are founded on fact; but certainly none of the

Italian novels have less that appearance, except where he has ransacked the ancient histories of Greece and Rome for horrible events. At the end of the 5th decade, the story of Lucretia is told of a Dalmatian lady. The 3d of the 8th decade, where a Scythian princess agrees with her sister's husband to murder their consorts, and afterwards ascend the throne, by poisoning the old king, over whose dead body his guilty daughter drives her chariot, is nothing more than the story of Tullia and Lucius Tarquinius Superbus. Sometimes Cinthio has only given a dark and gloomy colouring to the inventions of preceding novelists. For example, the 4th of the 4th decade, is just the story of Richard Minutolo in the Decameron, (see above, vol. ii. p. 19,) except that the contriver of the fraud is a villanous slave, instead of a gay and elegant gentleman, and that the lady, on the artifice being discovered, stabs the traitor and herself, in place of being reconciled to her lover, as represented by Boccaccio.

Of the stories which are his own invention, the 2d tale of the 2d decade is a striking example of those incidents of accumulated horror and atrocity, in which Cinthio seems to have chiefly delighted, and which border on the ludicrous when carried to excess. Orbecche, daughter of Sulmone, King of Persia, fell in love with a young Armenian, called Orontes, and for his sake refused the hand of the Prince of Parthia, who had been selected as her husband by her father. Sulmone long remained ignorant of the cause of her disobedience, but at last discovered that she was privately married to Orontes, and had two children by him. The unfortunate family escaped from his vengeance, and resided for nine years in an enemy's country. At the end of this period Sulmone feigned that he had forgiven his daughter, and persuaded her husband to come to the capital of Persia with his two children, but embraced an opportunity of making away with them at the first interview. On the arrival of his daughter, who followed her husband to Persia, he received her with apparent tenderness, and informed her he had prepared a magnificent nuptial present. He then invited her to lift a veil which concealed three basins. In one of these she found the head of her husband, and in two others the bodies of her chil-



dren, and the poniards with which they had been slain still remaining in their throats. Orbecche seized the daggers, presented them to her father, and begged he would complete his vengeance. The king returned them with a ghastly composure, assuring her that no farther revenge was desired by him. This *sang froid*, which seemed so ill warranted by circumstances, exasperated Orbecche to such a degree, that she threw herself on her father and forthwith despatched him. No other person now remaining to be massacred, (as her mother and brother had been slain by Sulmone in the early part of his reign,) she plunged one of the poniards into her own bosom. On this tale, as on several others of the Ecatommithi, the author himself has founded a tragedy, which is one of the most ancient and most esteemed in the Italian language.

The 7th of the 3d decade, which is much in the same style, though more interesting and pathetic, has furnished Shakspeare with the plot of the tragedy of Othello. Desdemona, a Venetian lady, being struck with admiration at the noble qualities of a Moor, called Othello, married him in defiance of her kindred, and accompanied him to Cyprus, where he had received a high command from the republic. The Moor's standard-bearer, or *ancient*, who was a great favourite of his master, became enamoured of Desdemona. Exasperated at her refusal to requite his affection, and jealous of the Moor's captain, whom he believed to be her favoured lover, he resolved on the destruction of both. The captain having been deprived of his command for some military offence, and the ensign understanding that Desdemona solicited her husband with much earnestness for his restoration, seized this opportunity of instilling suspicion into the mind of the Moor. He afterwards stole a handkerchief which she had received from her husband, and which the ensign informed him had been bestowed on the captain. The jealousy of the Moor received strength, when, on asking his wife for the handkerchief, he found she was unable to produce it, and was confirmed by the ensign afterwards contriving to show it to the Moor in the hands of a woman in the captain's house. Othello now resolved on the death of his wife and the captain. The ensign was employed in the murder of the latter : he failed

in the attempt, but afterwards, in concert with the Moor, despatched Desdemona, and pulled down part of the house, that it might be believed she had been crushed in its ruins. Soon after Othello conceived a violent hatred against the ensign, and deprived him of the situation he held. Enraged at this treatment, he revealed to the senate the crimes of his master, who was in consequence recalled from Cyprus. The torture to which he was brought had no effect in extorting a confession. Banishment, consequently, was the only penalty inflicted, but he was afterwards privately murdered in the place of his exile by the relations of Desdemona. The ensign subsequently expired on the rack, to which he was put for a crime totally unconnected with the main subject of the novel.

It may be remarked, that in the drama of Shakspeare, Iago is not urged on, as in Cinthio, by love turned to hatred, but by a jealousy of the Moor and his own wife, and resentment at the promotion of Cassio. He also employs his wife to steal the handkerchief, which in the novel he performs himself. On this theft the whole proof against Desdemona rests, both in the play and novel ; but in the latter the Moor insists on seeing it in the captain's hands, and the ensign contrives to throw the handkerchief into the possession of the captain, which in the drama is the result of chance. The character also of the Moor is entirely the invention of the English poet. Shakspeare's noble Othello is in Cinthio sullen, obstinate, and cruel. The catastrophe, too, as was necessary for theatrical exhibition, has been greatly altered.

In all these important variations, Shakspeare has improved on his original. In a few other particulars he has deviated from it with less judgment ; in most respects he has adhered with close imitation. The characters of Iago, Desdemona, and Cassio, are taken from Cinthio with scarcely a shade of difference. The obscure hints and various artifices of the villain to raise suspicion in the Moor, are the same in the novel and the drama. That scene where Othello's jealousy is so much excited, by remarking the gestures of Cassio, is copied from the Italian, as also his singular demand of receiving ocular demonstration of the guilt of Desdemona.

The 10th novel of the 5th decade has furnished to Dryden that part of his tragedy of *Amboyna* which relates to the rape of *Isabinda* by *Harman*.

In the 6th of the 6th decade, we are told, that *Livia*, a noble Italian matron, had a son, who was unfortunately stabbed in a quarrel with a young man of his own age. His enemy flying from the officers of justice, unconsciously seeks and obtains refuge in the house of the mother of the deceased, who had not yet been informed of her son's fate. After she had given her word for the security of the fugitive, her son's dead body is brought home, and by the arrival of the officers in pursuit, she discovers that she harboured his murderer. From a strict sense of honour she refuses to deliver him up, and about half an hour afterwards adopts him in the room of the child she had lost. This story is the underplot of *Beaumont and Fletcher's Custom of the Country*, where *Guiomar*, a widow lady of *Lisbon*, protects *Rutilio* when she supposes that he had killed her son *Duarte*, whom he had left for dead, after a scuffle in the streets. *Don Duarte*, however, recovering from his wound, the lady accepts *Rutilio* as her husband. Part of *Cibber's comedy, Love makes a Man*, is founded on a similar incident.

The 5th novel of the 8th decade, which has suggested the comedy of *Measure for Measure*, is equally sanguinary and improbable with the story of the Moor. A young man of *Inspruck* is condemned to be beheaded for having ravished a young woman in that city. His sister goes to solicit his pardon from the chief magistrate, who was reputed a man of austere virtue and rigid justice. On certain conditions he agrees to grant her request, but these being fulfilled, he presents her on the morning which followed her compliance with the corpse of her brother. The Emperor *Maximin* having been informed of this atrocious conduct, commands the magistrate to marry the woman he had betrayed, that she might be entitled to his wealth. He then orders the head of the culprit to be struck off; but when the sentence is on the point of execution, the bridegroom is pardoned at the intercession of the lady he had been forced to espouse. Many stories of a villany of this nature were current about the time that *Cinthio* wrote his *Ecatommithi*.

A similar crime was, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, believed of a favourite of Lewis XI. of France, and in the 17th chapter of Stephens' *Apology for Herodotus*, it is attributed to the Prevost de la Vouste; but there the lady sacrifices her honour for the sake of a husband, and not of a brother. We also read in *Lipsii Monita et Exempla Politica*, that Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy executed one of his noblemen for an offence of this infernal description, but previously, as in the novel of *Cinthio*, compelled him to espouse the lady he had deceived,—a story which is related in the *Spectator*, (No. 491.) A like treachery, as every one knows, was at one period attributed to Colonel Kirke. The novel of *Cinthio* passed into the tragic histories of *Belleforest*. The immediate original, however, of *Measure for Measure*, was Whetstone's play of *Promos and Cassandra*, published in 1578. In that drama the crime of the brother is softened into seduction: nor is he actually executed for his transgression, as a felon's head is presented in place of the one required by the magistrate. The king being complained to, orders the magistrate's head to be struck off, and the sister begs his life, even before she knows that her brother is safe. Shakspeare has adopted the alteration in the brother's crime, and the substitution of the felon's head. The preservation of the brother's life by this device might have been turned to advantage, as affording a ground for the intercession of his sister; but *Isabella* pleads for the life of *Angelo* before she knows her brother is safe, and when she is bound to him by no tie, as the duke does not order him to marry *Isabella*. From his own imagination Shakspeare has added the character of *Mariana*, *Angelo's* forsaken mistress, who saves the honour of the heroine by being substituted in her place. *Isabella*, indeed, had refused, even at her brother's entreaty, to give up her virtue to preserve his life. This is an improvement on the incidents of the novel, as it imperceptibly diminishes our sense of the atrocity of *Angelo*, and adds dignity to the character of the heroine. The secret superintendence, too, of the duke over the whole transaction, has a good effect, and increases our pleasure in the detection of the villain. In the fear of *Angelo*, lest the brother should take revenge "for so re-

ceiving a dishonoured life, with ransom of such shame," Shakspeare has given a motive to conduct which, in his prototypes, is attributed to wanton cruelty.

The 9th of the 10th decade, which relates to an absurd competition between a Pisan general and his son for the reward assigned to the person who had performed the most gallant action against the enemy, is the foundation of Beaumont and Fletcher's tiresome tragedy, the *Laws of Candy*. That drama opens with a ridiculous competition between Cassilane, general of Candy, and his son Antinous, as to which had performed the noblest exploit against the Venetians: the soldiers and senate decide in favour of the son, who thus becomes entitled, by the laws of Candy, to claim whatever he chooses. He very foolishly demands that a huge brass statue of his father should be set up on the Capitol, and is persecuted by his jealous parent, during the three last acts, with unrelenting cruelty.

Of all the tragic stories of Cinthio, the only one truly pathetic is that of a mother who by mistake poisons her only son in administering a draught to him while sick. The deathbed scene, in which the father commits the boy to the care of his mother; the beautiful picture of maternal care and tenderness by which it is succeeded—her feverish anxiety during his illness—her heartrending lamentations on discovery of the fatal error, settling on his death into a black despair, which rejects all consolation, and thence, by a natural transition, rises to ungovernable phrensy, all wring the heart in a manner which leaves us to regret that this novelist had told so many stories of Scythian and Armenian tyrants, who massacre whole tribes and generations without exciting the smallest sympathy or emotion.

All the tales of Cinthio, however, are not of the sanguinary and melancholy nature of those already mentioned. Some of them, though tragic in their commencement, have a happy conclusion, as the 6th of the 8th, in which the 68th of the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, and the *Fabliau D' un Roi, qui voulut faire bruler le fils de son Seneschal*, is applied to a Turkish bashaw and a Christian slave (see above, vol. i. p. 418).

The 8th of the 9th decade is the story of a widow lady,



who concealed a treasure in her house during the siege of Carthage. A daughter of the Roman soldier who had obtained this mansion being disappointed in love, resolved to hang herself; but in tying the rope she removed a beam which discovered the treasure, and completely consoled her for all misfortunes. This story was transferred to Paynter's Palace of Pleasure, under name of the Maids of Carthage. It seems also to have suggested the concluding incident of the old ballad the Heir of Linne, and the second part of *Le fils de Medecin Sacan*, one of Gueulette's *Contes Tartares*.

Some of the novels of Cinthio are meagre examples of the generosity of the family of Este, and convince us that in the author's age nothing was more rare than genuine liberality. The 3d of the 6th decade, however, is a remarkable instance of the continence of a duke of Ferrara, which has been told, in Luther's *Colloquia Mensalia*, of the Emperor Charles V., and which I have also somewhere seen related of the Chevalier Bayard.

A few stories of this novelist are intended as comical. In the 3d of the 1st decade, a soldier travelling with a philosopher and astrologer, the wise men mistake their military companion for a silly fellow; and as they were reduced to a single loaf of bread, resolve to cozen him out of his share. They accordingly propose that it should belong to the person who experiences the most delightful dream in the course of the ensuing night. The soldier, who perceived their drift, rose while they were asleep, eat the loaf, and on the morrow reported this substantial incident, as the dream with which he had been favoured. This story corresponds precisely with the eighteenth tale of Petrus Alphonsus, except that in the eastern original the actors are two citizens and a countryman: it is also related in *Historia Jeschuae Nazareni*, a life of our Saviour, of Jewish invention. From the sixteenth of Alphonsus, Cinthio has also derived a story (ninth of first decade,) of a merchant who loses a bag containing 400 crowns. He advertises it, with a reward to any one who finds it; but when brought to him by a poor woman, he attempts to defraud her of the promised recompense, alleging that, beside the 400 crowns, it contained some ducats, which he



had neglected to specify in the advertisement, and which she must have purloined. The Marquis of Mantua, to whom the matter is referred, decides, that as it wanted the ducats it could not be the merchant's, advises him again to proclaim his loss, and bestows on the poor woman the whole contents of the purse. In Alphonsus we have a philosopher instead of the Marquis of Mantua: the merchant, too, pretends that there were two golden serpents, though he had only advertised the loss of one, which made his deceit more flagrant, as the omission was less probable. This story has been imitated in innumerable tales and facetiae, both French and Italian.

The whole of the 7th decade consists of jests and repartees: for example—The poet Dante dining at the table of Cane Della Scala, Lord of Verona, that prince ingeniously contrived to throw all the bones which had been picked at table at the feet of Dante, and on the table being removed affected the utmost amazement at the appetite of a poet who had left such remains. “My lord,” replied Dante, “had I been a *dog* (*cane*) you would not have found so many bones at my feet.” Even this indifferent story is not original, being copied from the Dantis Faceta Responsio of Poggio, which again is merely an application to an Italian prince and poet of the Fabliau Les Deux Parasites (Le Grand, vol. iii. p. 95). The notion, however, of this absurd trick, is older even than the Fabliau, having been played, as Josephus informs us (book xii. c. 4), on the Jew boy Hyrcanus while seated at the table of Ptolemy, King of Egypt: “And being asked how he came to have so many bones before him, he replied, ‘Very rightfully, my lord: for they are dogs that eat the flesh and bones together, as these thy guests have done, for there is nothing before them; but they are men that eat the flesh and cast away the bones, as I have now done.’ On which the king admired at his answer, which was so wisely made; and bid them all make an acclamation, as a mark of their approbation of his jest, which was truly a facetious one.”

Though both the comical and pathetic stories of the Ecatommiti be inferior to those introduced in the Decameron, the work of Cinthio ends perhaps more naturally. The termination of the voyage by the arrival at Marseilles

is a better conclusion than the return to Florence. At the end of the whole there is a long poetical address, in which Cinthio has celebrated most of his eminent literary contemporaries in Italy, particularly Bernardo Tasso—

Compagno avendo il suo gentil Figliuolo.

Of all Italian novelists, Cinthio appears to have been the greatest favourite with our old English dramatists. We have already seen that two of the most popular of Shakespeare's plays were taken from his novels. Beaumont and Fletcher have been indebted to him for several of their plots; and the incidents of many scattered scenes in the works of these dramatists, as also of Shirley, may be traced to the same source. The spirit, too, of atrocity and bloodshed, which characterizes the *Ecatommithi*, fostered in England a similar taste, which has been too freely indulged by our early tragic writers, most of whom appear to have agreed in opinion with the author of *Les Amusemens de Muley Bugentuf*—"on auroit toujours vu périr dans mes tragedies non seulement les principaux personnages mais les gardes memes; J'aurois egorgé jusques au souffleur." Horrible incidents, when extravagantly employed by the novelist or dramatic poet, are merely an abuse of art, to which they are driven by indigence of genius. It is easy to carry such repulsive atrocities to excess; but when thus accumulated, they rather excite a sense of ridicule, than either terror or sympathy. We shudder at the murder of Duncan and weep at the death of Zara, but we can scarcely refrain from laughter at the last scenes of the *Andromana* of Shirley.

The next Italian novelist is ANTON FRANCESCO GRAZZINI, who was commonly called *Il Lasca* (Mullet), the appellation he assumed in the Academy degli Umidi, to which he belonged, where every member was distinguished by the name of a fish. *Lasca* was spawned at Florence in the beginning of the 16th century, and was one of the founders of the celebrated academy *Della Crusca*. He is said to have been a person of a lively and whimsical disposition: he resided chiefly at the place of his birth, where he also died in 1533. The account of his life, written by

Anton Maria Biscioni, which is a complete specimen of the accuracy and controversial minuteness of Italian biography, is prefixed to his *Rime*, printed at Florence in 1741.

The novels of Grazzini are reckoned much better than his poetry; they are accounted very lively and entertaining, and the style has been considered by the Italian critics as remarkable for simplicity and elegance. These tales are divided into three evenings (*tre cene*). None of these parts were published till long after the death of the author. The second evening, containing ten stories, was first edited. It appeared at Florence in 1743, and afterwards, along with the first evening, which also comprehends ten stories, at Paris, though with the date of London, in 1756. Of the third part, only one tale has hitherto been published.

In order to introduce his stories, Grazzini feigns that one day towards the end of January, some time between the years 1540 and 1550, a party of four young men met after dinner at the house of a noble and rich widow of Florence, for the purpose of visiting her brother, who resided there at the time. The widow had four young female relatives who lived in the house with her. A snow storm coming on, the company amuse themselves in a court with throwing snow-balls. They afterwards assemble round the fire, and, as the storm increased, the gentlemen are prevailed on to stay to supper, and it is resolved to relate stories till the repast be ready. As the party had little time for preparation, the tales of that evening are short; but at separating it is agreed that they should meet at the distance of a week and fortnight to relate stories more detailed in their circumstances. Although the tales are lost, or at least not edited, which may be presumed to have been the longest, those that are published are of greater length than most of the Italian tales. Of these, many consist of tricks or deceptions practised on fools or coxcombs, which are invariably exaggerated and improbable. The best story in the work, though not free from these defects, is the first of the second evening, which turns on the extreme resemblance of a peasant to a rich fool, who resided in his neighbourhood, and who is accidentally

drowned while they are fishing together. The peasant equips himself in the clothes which his companion had left on the bank of the river when he went in to dive for fish, and runs to the nearest house, calling help for the poor countryman. When the body is found, it passes for the corpse of the rustic, who assumes the manners of the deceased, takes possession of his house, and enjoys this singular heirship till death, without discovering the imposture to any one except his wife, with whom he again performs the marriage ceremony. The relatives of the deceased are not surprised that their kinsman should espouse the widow of a peasant, but are astonished at those gleams of intelligence which occasionally burst forth in spite of counterfeited stupidity. Stories of this nature are not uncommon in fiction, and have all probably had their origin in the Menechmi of Plautus. Idiots seem to have been the favourite heroes of Grazzini: he has another story taken from one of the Fabliaux, or perhaps from Poggio's *Mortuus Loquens*, of a fool, who is persuaded by his wife that he is dead. He suffers himself to be carried out for interment, but springs up on hearing himself disrespectfully mentioned by some one who witnessed the funeral. The ninth of the second night coincides with the seventh of Firenzuola, and the tenth of the same evening with a tale of Fortini. The last story contains an account of a cruel, and by no means ingenious, trick practised by Lorenzo de Medicis on a physician of Florence.

ORTENSIO LANDO, a Milanese gentleman, was author of fourteen tales, inserted in his *Varii Componimenti*, printed at Venice, 1552, 8vo. The Italian writers inform us, that he early adopted the opinions of Luther, abandoned his country, and sought refuge in Germany. Little more is known concerning the incidents of the life of this heretical novelist. With regard to his tales, the author himself acquaints us that he imitated Boccaccio, which is the great boast of the novelists who wrote in the middle and towards the close of the 16th century; and of this resemblance they are as anxious to persuade their readers, as their predecessors had been to testify the truth and originality of their stories.

The chief excellence of the tales of Lando is said to

consist in the grace and facility of the diction in which they are clothed. The 13th, however, though it wants the merit of originality, being taken from the fabliau of La Houce partie, published by Barbazan, possesses, I think, intrinsic excellence. A Florentine merchant, who had been extremely rich, becoming sickly and feeble, and being no longer of any service to his family, in spite of his intercessions, was sent by his son to the hospital. The cruelty of this conduct made a great noise in the city, and the son, more from shame than affection, despatched one of his own children, who was about six years of age, with a couple of shirts to his grandfather. On his return he was asked by his parent if he had executed the commission. "I have only taken one shirt," replied he. "Why so?" asked the father. "I have kept the other," said the child, "for the time when I shall send you to the hospital." This answer had the effect of despatching the unnatural son to beg his father's pardon, and to conduct him home from his wretched habitation.

GIOVAN FRANCESCO STRAPAROLA is not one of the most esteemed Italian novelists, but none of them are more curious for illustrating the genealogy of fiction. Straparola was born at Carravaggio, but resided chiefly at Venice. The first part of his work, which he has been pleased to entitle *Tredecì piacevoli notte*, was printed at Venice in 1550, 8vo, and the second part at the same place, 1554. These were followed by four editions, comprehending the whole work. The stories amount in all to seventy-four, and are introduced by the fiction of a princess and her father being reduced to a private station, and attaching to themselves a select party of friends, who, for the sake of recreation, and to enjoy the cool air, as it was summer, entertain each other during night with relating stories.

Straparola has borrowed copiously from preceding authors. Thus the 3d of 1st night resembles the story *Des Trois Larrons*, in the *Fabliaux* (see above, vol. i. p. 407.)

4th of 1st. Is from the 1st of 10th of the *Pecorone*, which has already been mentioned as the origin of Chaucer's *Man of Lawe's Tale* (see above, vol. ii. 86).



2d of 2d. Is from 2d of 2d of the Pecorone, or *Les Deux Changeurs*, in the *Fabliaux* (see above, vol. ii. p. 80.)

3d of 2d. Is nothing more than an old mythological tale, though the metamorphosis it describes is a little less elegant than that of *Daphne* or *Lodona*.

4th of 2d. Machiavel and Brevio's story of *Belfagor* (see above, vol. ii. p. 101.)

1st of 4th. That part where the Satyr laughs at an old man in tears attending the funeral of a child, whom he imagined to be his own, but who was, in fact, the son of the chaplain officiating at the ceremony, is from the romance of *Merlin*.

2d of 4th. From the Ordeal of the Serpent, in the romance of *Vergilius* (see above, vol. i. p. 372).

4th of 4th. Is from 2d of 1st of the Pecorone, already pointed out as the origin of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, &c. (see above, vol. ii. p. 79).

3d of 5th. The *Fabliau* of *Les Trois Bossus*.

1st of 6th. The first part is Poggio's *Nasi Supplementum*. The second part, which relates to the reprisal of the husband, is from *La Peche de l' Anneau*, the 3d story of the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, which had been written in France before this time.

3d of 7th. From the 195th of *Sacchetti* (see above, vol. ii. p. 73).

2d of 8th. From *Fabliau La Dame qui fut Escolée*.

4th of 8th. Is the 95th of the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, where a wine merchant, who sold his wine half mixed with water, miraculously loses the half of his gains.

6th of 8th. Is merely an expansion of the *Clitella*, one of Poggio's *Facetiae*.

2d of 9th. Where the Prince of Hungary, being in love with a woman of inferior condition, is sent by his father to travel, and finding on his return that she is married, expires by her side, and his mistress also dies of grief, is precisely the 8th of 4th day of the *Decameron*.

3d of 9th. An adventure of *Tristan's* in Ireland applied to an Italian prince.

3d of 10th. Is the common story of a lady freed by her favourite knight, when on the point of being devoured by a monster.



5th of 12th. From 1st of 10th of the Decameron (see above, vol. ii. p. 60).

1st of 13th. Is the *Insanus Sapiens*, the 2d story in Poggio's *Facetiae*.

2d of 13th. Is from the 1st of Sozzini, an obscure Italian novelist of the 15th century. A certain person having purchased some capons from a peasant, tells him that he will receive payment from a friar, to whom he conducts him. When they are admitted to the holy man, the purchaser whispers in his ear, that the countryman had come to confess his sins; and then says aloud, that the priest will attend to him instantly. The peasant supposing that his debtor spoke of the money he owed for the capons, allows him to depart without paying their price; but on holding out his hand to receive it, he is desired to kneel down by the confessor, who immediately crosses himself and commences a *Paternoster*.

Straparola, however, has levied his heaviest contributions on the eighty novels of Jerome Morlini, a work written in Latin, and printed at Naples in 1520, 4to, but now almost utterly unknown, as there was but one edition, and even of this impression most of the copies were deservedly committed to the flames soon after the publication: there has been lately, however, a reprint at Paris from one of the copies still extant. Many of the tales of Straparola are closely imitated, and the last thirteen are literally translated from the Latin of Morlini. One of these is the common story of a physician, who said that the whole practice of physic consisted in three rules,—to keep the feet warm, the head cool, and to feed like the beasts, that is, according to nature.

But although Straparola has copied largely from others, no one has suggested more to his successors. His work seems to have been a perfect storehouse for future Italian novelists, and the French authors of fairy and oriental tales. The 1st tale, which was itself partly suggested by the 52d of the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, and was separately published in the 16th century, is the origin of the second of the *Tartar Tales*, *Sinadab fils de Medecin Sacan*. Fontaine's *Faiseur d'oreilles et racommodeur de moules*, is from the first half of the 1st of 6th. The last part of the

1st of 8th is the often-repeated story Get up and bar the Door. In the conclusion of this tale of Straparola, there is a dispute between a husband and his wife who should shut the door. A stranger comes in, and uses unsuitable familiarities with the wife, who reproaches her husband with his patience, and is in consequence obliged to shut the door, according to agreement. The 2d of 8th may have suggested the *École des Maris* of Moliere, where two guardians, who are brothers, bring up their wards on different systems of education, the one on a rigid, and the other on a more lax system. The 5th of 8th is the origin of Armin's Italian Tailor and his Boy, printed in 1609.

It is chiefly, however, as being the source of those fairy tales which were so prevalent in France in the commencement of the 18th century, that the Nights of Straparola are curious in tracing the progress of fiction. The northern elves had by this time got possession of Scotland, and perhaps of England, but the stories concerning their more brilliant sisterhood of the East, were concentrated, in the middle of the 16th century, in the tales of Straparola. Thus, for example, the 3d of the 4th is a complete fairy tale. A courtier of the King of Provino overheard the conversation of three sisters, one of whom said, that if married to the king's butler she would satisfy the royal household with a cup of wine; the second, that if united to the chamberlain she would weave webs of exquisite fineness; the third, that if the king espoused her she would bring him three children, with golden hair, and a star on their forehead. This conversation being reported at court, the king is so much delighted with the fancy of having children of this description that he marries the youngest sister. The jealousy of the queen-mother and the remaining sisters being excited by her good fortune, when the queen in due time gives birth to two sons and a daughter, they substitute three puppies in their place, and throw the children into the stream; they are preserved, however, by a peasant, who is soon enriched by their golden locks, and the pearls they shed instead of tears. Having grown up, they come to the capital, and the sisters, discovering who they are, resolve on their destruction. These women ingratiate themselves with the princess, and persuade her to

send her brothers on a dangerous expedition, of which the object is to find the beautifying water, which, after many perils, they acquire by directions of a pigeon; and the singing apple, which they obtain by being clothed in enchanted vestments, which fright away the monster by whom the tree was guarded. But in their attempts, to gain the singing bird they are retarded by being themselves converted into statues. The princess, however, arrives at the spot and takes the bird captive, by whose means they are disenchanted, and finally informed concerning their parentage. In whatever way it may have come to Straparola, this is precisely the story of the Princess Parizade, which forms the last of the Arabian Nights Entertainments, where a queen is promoted in the same manner as in Straparola, and persecuted in the same manner by the jealousy of sisters, whose last effort is persuading the young Princess Parizade to insist on her brothers procuring for her use the talking bird, the singing tree, and golden water. Madame D' Aulnoy's fairy tale of Belle Etoile has been copied either from the Arabian or Italian story. Indeed all the best fairy tales of that lady, as well as most others which compose the *Cabinet des Feés*, are mere translations from the Nights of Straparola. The 1st of 2d is Mad. D' Aulnoy's Prince Marcassin, and 1st of 3d is her Dauphin. In the 3d of the 3d a beautiful princess, called Biancabella, is married to the King of Naples; but while he is absent prosecuting a war, his stepmother sends her to a desert, while her own daughter personates Biancabella on the king's return. The queen is succoured by a fairy, to whom she had shown kindness while in the shape of a fawn: by her means she is at length restored to her husband, and the guilty punished. This is the well-known story of *Blanchebelle*, in the *Illustres Feés*. That of *Fortunio*, in the same collection, is from the 4th of the 3d, where the departure of Fortunio from the house of his parents—the judgment he pronounces—the power of metamorphosis which he in consequence receives—his transformation into a bird—his mode of acquiring the princess in marriage—the whole of his adventure in the palace of the Syrens, and final escape from that enchanted residence, are precisely the same as in the well-known tale of For-

tunio. The 1st of the 5th is the fairy tale of Prince Guerini, and the 1st of the 11th is the *Maitre Chat*, or *Chat Botté*, of Perrault, well known to every child in this country by the name of *Puss in Boots*. Straparola's cat, however, is not booted, and the concluding adventure of the castle is a little different: in the Italian tale, the real proprietor, who was absent, dies on his way home, so that Constantine is not disturbed in his possession; but in the *Maitre Chat*, the Cat persuades the Ogre, to whom it belonged, to change himself into a mouse, and thus acquires the privilege of devouring him. The 1st of 4th, 2d of 5th, 1st of 7th and 5th of 8th, are all in the same style; and some of them may perhaps be more particularly mentioned when we come to treat of the fairy tales which were so prevalent in France early in the 18th century.

But while the *Nights of Straparola* are thus curious in illustrating the transmission and progress of fiction, few of them deserve to be analyzed on account of their intrinsic merit. The second of the seventh night, however, is a romantic story, and places in a striking light the violence of the amorous and revengeful passions of Italians. Between the mainland of Ragusa and an island at some distance, stood a rock entirely surrounded by the sea. On this barren cliff there was no building, except a church, and a small cottage inhabited by a young hermit, who came to seek alms sometimes at Ragusa, but more frequently at the island. There he is seen and admired by a young woman, confessedly the most beautiful of the inhabitants. As she is neither dilatory nor ceremonious in communicating her sentiments, and as the hermit had received from her beauty corresponding impressions, nothing but a favourable opportunity is wanting to consummate their happiness. With consistent frankness of conduct, she requests her lover to place a lamp in the window of his cottage at a certain hour of the night, and promises that, if thus guided, she will swim to the hermitage. Soon as she spied the signal, she departed on this marine excursion, and arrived at the love-lighted mansion of the recluse. From his cell, to which she was conducted, she returned, undiscovered, at the approach of dawn; and, emboldened by impunity, repeatedly availed herself of the beacon. At

length she was remarked by some boatmen, who had nearly fished her up, and who informed her brothers of her amphibious disposition, the spot to which she resorted, and their suspicion of the mode by which she was directed. Her kinsmen forthwith resolve on her death. The youngest brother proceeds in twilight to the rock, and, in order that the signal might not be displayed, implores for that night the hospitality of the hermit. On the same evening the elder brothers privately leave their house in a boat, with a concealed light and a pole. Having rowed to that part of the deep which washed the hermitage, they placed the light on the pole. Their sister, who appears to have been ever watchful, departed from the island. When the brothers heard her approach, they slipped away through the water, and as the pole was fastened to the boat, they drew the light along with them. The poor wretch, who in the dark saw no other object, followed the delusion to the main sea, in which it was at length extinguished. Three days afterwards her body was washed ashore on the rock, where it was interred by her lover. Thus, adds the approving novelist, the reputations of the brothers and the sister were equally and at once preserved.

The first part of this tale was probably suggested by the classical fable of Hero and Leander. It is the subject of a poem by Bernard le Gentil, entitled *Euphrosiné et Melidor*.

BANDELLO, who, in this country at least, is the best known of all the Italian novelists except Boccaccio, was born in the neighbourhood of Tortona. He resided for some time at Milan, where he composed a number of his novels, but, wearied with the tumults and revolutions of that state, he retired, in 1534, to a village in the vicinity of Agen in France. Here he revised and added to his novels, which some friends had recovered from the hands of the soldiers who burned his house at Milan. In 1550 he was raised by Francis I. to the bishopric of Agen, where he died in 1562. His tales were first published at Lucca, 1554, 4to. In the complete editions of Bandello, the work is divided into four parts, the first, second, and third parts containing fifty-nine stories, and the fourth twenty-eight. The whole are dedicated to Ippolita Sforza, though she



died before their publication, because it was at her desire that the work was originally undertaken. Besides this general dedication, each novel is addressed to some *Valoroso Signore* or *Chiarissima Signora*, and in this introduction the novelist generally explains how he came to a knowledge of the event he is about to relate. He usually declares that he heard it told in company, mentions the name of the teller, details the conversation by which it was introduced, and pretends to report it, as far as his memory serves, in the exact words of his authority.

The novels of Bandello have been blamed for negligence and impurity of style. Of this the author appears to have been sensible, and repeatedly apologizes for his defects in elegance of diction. "Io non son Toscano nè bene intendo la proprieta di quella lingua; anzi mi confesso Lombardo." This is the reason, perhaps, why the tales of Bandello have been less popular in Italy than in foreign countries, where, as we shall now find, they have been much read and imitated.

Part I. 9. From the *Fabliau du Chevalier qui confessa sa femme*. For the various transmigrations of this story, (see above, vol. ii. p. 41.)

21. A Bohemian nobleman has a magic picture, which, by its colour, shows the fidelity or aberrations of his spouse. This is the origin of Massinger's fanciful play of the *Picture*, where Mathias, a knight of Bohemia, receives a similar present from the scholar Baptista. The manner in which two Hungarian gentlemen attempt to seduce the lady in her husband's absence, and the contrivance by which she repulses both, are the same in the novel and the drama. Massinger, however, has added the temptation held forth to the husband by the queen.

The incident which relates to the *Picture* is probably of oriental origin. In the history of Zeyn Alasnam, in the *Arabian Nights*, the king of the genii gives that prince a mirror, which reflected the representation of the woman whose chastity he might wish to ascertain. If the glass remained pure she was immaculate; but, if on the contrary, it became sullied, she had not been always unspotted, or had ceased to desire being so. From the East this magical contrivance was introduced into many early



romances of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and thence, by a natural transition, found its way into the novels of Bandello.

22. Is the origin of Shakspeare's *Much Ado about Nothing*, and is the longest tale in the work of Bandello. The deception, which forms the leading incident, is as old as the romance of *Tirante the White*, but was probably suggested to the Italian novelist by a story in the *Orlando Furioso*. In the fifth canto of that poem, the Duke of Albany is enamoured of Gineura, daughter of the King of Scotland. This princess, however being prepossessed in favour of an Italian lover, the duke has recourse to stratagem to free himself from this dangerous rival. He persuades the waiting-maid of Gineura to disguise herself for one night in the attire of her mistress, and in this garb to throw down a ladder from the window, by which he might ascend into the chamber of Gineura. The duke had previously so arranged matters that the Italian beheld in concealment this scene, so painful to a lover. Gineura is condemned to death for the imaginary transgression, and is only saved by the opportune arrival of the paladin Rinaldo, who declares himself the champion of the accused princess.

In the tale of Bandello, which is evidently borrowed from the *Orlando*, Lionato, a gentleman of Messina had a daughter named Fenicia, who was betrothed to Timbreo de Cardona, a young man of the same city. Girondo, a disappointed lover of the young lady, having resolved to prevent the marriage, sends a confidant to Timbreo to warn him of the disloyalty of his mistress, and offers that night to show him a stranger scaling her chamber window. Timbreo accepts the invitation, and in consequence sees the hired servant of Girondo, in the dress of a gentleman, ascend a ladder, and enter the house of Lionato. Stung with rage and jealousy, he next morning accuses his innocent mistress to her father, and rejects the alliance. Fenicia, on hearing this intelligence, sinks down in a swoon. This is followed by a dangerous illness, which gives her father an opportunity of preventing reports injurious to her fame by pretending she is dead. She is accordingly sent to the country, and her funeral rites are celebrated in Messina.

Girondo, struck with remorse at having occasioned her death, now confesses his villany to Timbreo, after which they proceed together to make the requisite apologies to her family. The sole penance which the father imposes on Timbreo is, that he should espouse a lady of his selection, and that he should not demand to see her previous to the performance of the bridal ceremony. At the nuptial festival, Timbreo, instead of the new bride he awaited, is presented with the innocent and much-injured Fenicia. That part of *Much Ado about Nothing*, which relates to Hero, though it came to Shakspeare through the medium of the histories of Belleforest, bears a striking resemblance to this novel. In the comedy, as in the tale, the scene is laid at Messina, and the father's name is Leonato. Claudio is about to be married to Hero, but Don John attempts to prevent the match. He consults with a villanous confederate, who undertakes to scale Hero's window in the sight of Claudio. The lover having been witness to this scene, promulgates the infamy of Hero. She faints on hearing of the accusation : she is believed dead, and her funeral rites are celebrated. The treachery being accidentally detected, Leonato insists that Claudio should marry his niece, instead of his deceased daughter, but at the marriage the destined bride proves to be Hero. Notwithstanding this general resemblance, the English poet has deviated from his original in three striking alterations. In the first place, Don John is merely anxious to prevent the match from spleen and hatred towards Claudio, while in the tale the villain is entirely actuated by a passion for the bride. Secondly, the device by which the jealousy of the lover is awakened, is carried farther in *Much Ado about Nothing* than in *Bandello* ; in the former the friend of Don John persuades the waiting-maid of Hero to personate her mistress at the window, a stratagem resorted to in the story of *Geneura* in the *Orlando*, which shows that Shakspeare had not exclusively borrowed from *Bandello*. Lastly, in the comedy the deceit is not discovered by the voluntary confession of the traitor, but is detected by a watchman on the street overhearing the associate of the principal villain relating to his friend the success of the stratagem, by way of conversation. In the two first deviations the

dramatist, I think, has improved on his original, but in the third has altered to the worse. A similar story with that in the *Decameron* and *Much Ado about Nothing*, occurs in Spenser's *Faery Queene* (B. 2. c. 4.) There Guyon, in the course of his adventures, meets with a squire, who relates to him that a false friend being enamoured of the same mistress with himself, had instilled suspicions into his mind, which he had afterwards confirmed by treacherously exhibiting himself disguised as a groom at an amorous interview with a waiting-maid, whom he had persuaded to assume the dress of her mistress Clariabella. See also the 9th novel of the introduction to the tales of Cinthio.

23. A girl kisses her nurse's eye to allow her lover to escape unseen: this is from the 8th tale of Petrus Alphonsus.

25. Story of the architect and his son, who rob the king's treasury. (See above, vol. ii. p. 83.)

29. Common story of a simple fellow who thinks a sermon is entirely addressed to himself.

42. A gentleman of Valentia privately espouses a woman of low birth; he long delays to make the marriage public, and she at length ascertains that he is about to be united to a lady of high rank. Soon after the celebration of the nuptials, she pretends to have forgiven this breach of faith, and persuades him to come one night to her house, where, when he has fallen asleep, she binds him with ropes, by aid and counsel of a female slave, and after subjecting him to the most frightful mutilation, plunges a dagger in his heart. This is the origin of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Triumph of Death*, the third of their *Four Plays in One*, where Lavall, the lustful heir of the Duke of Anjou, having abandoned his wife Gabriella, for a new bride, is enticed to her house by contrivance of her servant Mary, and is there murdered while under the influence of a sleeping potion.

57. A king of Morocco, while engaged in the chase, is separated from his attendants, and loses his way. He is received and hospitably entertained by a fisherman, who, ignorant of the quality of his visiter, treats him with considerable freedom, but is loud in his praises of the king.

Next morning the rank of his guest is revealed to the fisherman by the arrival of those courtiers who had accompanied their monarch in the chase. A similar occurrence is related in the *Fabliaux*, as well as many of the old English ballads, and probably had its origin in some adventure of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid. The tale of *Bandello* is the origin of *Le Roi et le Fermier* of M. Sedaine.

Part II. 9. Story of *Romeo and Juliet*. (See above, vol. ii. p. 93.)

15. *Pietro*, a favourite of *Alessandro de Medicis*, carried off the daughter of a miller, who soon after proceeded to Florence, and complained of this violence to the duke. *Alessandro* went, as on a visit, to the house of his favourite, and asked to survey the different apartments. The latter excused himself from showing one of the smaller rooms. The door, however, being at length burst open, and the girl discovered, the duke compelled him to marry her, on pain of losing his head. That part of *Beaumont and Fletcher's* comedy *The Maid in the Mill*, which relates to *Otranto* and *Florimel*, the supposed daughter of the miller *Franio*, is founded on the above novel.

35. Is the same story with the plot of the *Mysterious Mother* of *Horace Walpole*, and the thirtieth tale of the *Queen of Navarre*. The first part of this story had been already told in the 23d novel of *Massuccio*. The second part, which relates to the marriage, only occurs in *Bandello* and the *Queen of Navarre*. It is not likely, however, that the French or Italian novelists borrowed from one another. The tales of *Bandello* were first published in 1554, and as the *Queen of Navarre* died in 1549, it is improbable that she had an opportunity of seeing them. On the other hand, the work of the queen was not printed till 1558, nine years after her death, so it is not likely that any part of it was copied by *Bandello*, whose tales had been edited some years before. It may, therefore, be presumed that some current tradition furnished both with the horrible incident they report. Indeed *Bandello* declares in the introduction to the tale, that it happened in *Navarre*, and was told to him by a lady of that country. In *Luther's Colloquia Mensalia*, under the article *Auricular Confession*,

it is said to have occurred at Erfurt, in Germany. It is also related in the eleventh chapter of *Byshop's Blossoms*, and in *L'Inceste Innocent*, a novel by Des Fontaines, published 1638. Julio de Medrano, an old Spanish writer of the 16th century, says that he heard a similar story when he was in the Bourbonnois, where the inhabitants showed him the house in which the parties had lived, and repeated to him this epitaph, which was inscribed on their tomb:—

Cy-gist la fille, cy-gist le pere,  
Cy-gist la soeur, cy-gist le frere;  
Cy-gist la femme, et le mary,  
Et si n'y a que deux corps icy.

Mr. Walpole disclaims having had any knowledge of the tale of the Queen of Navarre or *Bandello* at the time he wrote his drama. Its plot, he says, was suggested by a story he had heard when very young, of a lady, who, under uncommon agonies of mind, waited on Archbishop Tillotson, revealed her crime, and besought his counsel in what manner she should act, as the fruit of her horrible artifice had lately been married to her son, neither party being aware of the relation that subsisted betwixt them. The prelate charged her never to let her son or daughter know what had passed. For herself he bade her almost despair. The dramatist has rather added to the horror and improbability of this tale, than mellowed it by softer shades; but his poem deserves much praise for strong expression, and powerful delineation of monastic cruelty and fraud.

36. Has usually been accounted the origin of Shakspeare's *Twelfth Night*. The rudiments, however, of the story of *Bandello* may be found in *Cinthio*. In the *Ecatommithi* of that author, a gentleman falling under the displeasure of the King of Naples, leaves that country with his two children, a boy and girl, who had a striking resemblance to each other. The vessel in which they had departed is shipwrecked, and the father is supposed to be lost, but the two children get safe to shore, and are brought up unknown to each other by two different persons who resided near the coast. The girl, when she grows



up, falls in love with a young man, and, by the intervention of an old woman, goes to serve him in the garb of a page, and is mistaken by her master for her brother, who had formerly been in his service, but had eloped in female disguise, to prosecute an intrigue in the neighbourhood.

In *Bandello* the circumstances are more developed than in *Cinthio*, and bear a closer resemblance to the drama. An Italian merchant had two children, a boy and girl, so like in personal appearance, that when dressed in a similar manner, they could hardly be distinguished by their parents. The boy was lost in the sack of Rome by the Imperialists, being carried off by a German soldier. After this event, the father went with his daughter to reside at Aix, in Savoy. When the girl grows up, she has a lover of whom she is deeply enamoured, but who afterwards forsakes her. At this time her father being absent on business, and her faithless lover having lately lost a favourite attendant, by the intervention of her nurse she is received into his service in disguise of a page. She soon obtains the confidence of her master, and is employed by him to propitiate the rival who had supplanted her in his affections. This lady falls in love with the disguised emissary. Meanwhile the brother having obtained his liberty by the death of his German master, comes in search of his father to Aix, where he is seen and courted by the female admirer of his sister, who, deceived by the resemblance, mistakes him for the object of her attachment. At length, by the arrival of the father, the whole mystery is cleared up. The lover returns to the mistress he had forsaken, and who had suffered so much for his sake, while the brother more than supplies his sister's place with her fair admirer. The disguise of the young lady, which is the basis of this tale, and the plot of *Twelfth Night*, is not improbable in the former, as it was assumed with the view of recalling the affections of a lover; but *Viola*, separated from her brother in a storm, and driven on an unknown coast, forms the wild project of engaging the affections of the duke, to whose person she was a stranger, and whose heart she understood was devoted to another. Influenced by no passion nor motive, she throws off the decorum of her sex, and serves the destined husband of *Olivia* in an useless



and unworthy disguise. The love, too, of the duke's mistress for the disguised Viola, is more improbable from the circumstances of her situation and temper, than the passion of the Catella of the novelist. In Bandello, the brother has an object in coming to Aix, where his father and sister resided, but it is difficult to assign a motive for Sebastian's journey to Illyria. It is also more likely, as in the novel, that a lover should return to a mistress he had forsaken, on receiving a striking instance of fidelity and tenderness, than that the duke should abandon a woman he passionately adored, and espouse a stranger, of whose sex he had hitherto been ignorant, and who had not even love to plead as an excuse for her transgression of the bounds of decorum.\* A lady disguised in boy's clothes, and serving her lover as a page, or otherwise, for the interests of her love, is one of the most common incidents in the Italian novels and our early British dramas. Besides *Twelfth Night*, and the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, it is the foundation of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster*, Shirley's *Grateful Servant*, *School of Compliment*, *Maid's Revenge*, &c.

Part III. 41. Story common in our English jest-books, of a Spaniard who asks part of a dinner for himself, giving his name at full length, and is told there are not provisions for so many people. In the English story I think he asks lodging.

46. Is the most obscene story in Bandello, or perhaps in the whole series of Italian novels, yet it is said in the introduction to have been related by Navagero to the Princess of Mantua and Duchess of Urbino.

47. Is from 4th of 8th of Boccaccio.

59. An Italian count, who had long doubted of his wife's fidelity, at length becomes assured of her constancy from her assiduous attendance during a long sickness, which had in fact been created by a poison she had administered. Being at length informed, however, by a domestic, that his wife embraced the opportunity of his confinement from illness to receive the visits of a lover, he is enabled to detect them together, and sacrifices both to his resentment. This

\* Shakspeare Illustrated, vol. ii.

tale is the first part of *La Force d' Amitié*, a story introduced by Le Sage in his *Diable Boiteux*.

Part IV. 17. Marquis of Ferrara prepares a mock execution, and the victim of this villanous jest expires from apprehension. A similar effect of terror forms the subject of Miss Baillie's play of the *Dream*, which is the second of her tragedies on Fear.

The ancestors of NICOLAO GRANUCCI,\* being of the Guelph faction, were expelled from Lucca in the beginning of the 14th century, but afterwards returned and spread out into numerous branches, through the various states of Italy. It is from the circumstances of his family that this novelist deduces the origin of his stories, as he informs the reader, that being at Sienna in 1568, he went to the neighbouring town of Pienza, to inquire if there were any descendants of the Granucci settled there. He was conducted by two of the inhabitants to an abbey in the vicinity, and after his arrival, was carried to see the Villa de Trojano, by one of the monks, who, on the way, related a number of tales, of which at parting he presented a compendium in writing; and from this MS. Granucci asserts, that he afterwards formed his work, which was published at Venice, 1574. The 5th story of Granucci is from the 1st of Petrus Alphonsus. A son boasts of the number of his friends to his father, who advises him to try them, by putting a dead calf in a sack, and pretending that it is the corpse of a person he had murdered. When he asks his friends to assist him in concealing it, they unanimously decline doing any thing in the matter, but the service is undertaken by the sole friend of whom the father boasted. This story is older even than Alphonsus; I think it is of classical origin, and has been somewhere told of Dionysius of Syracuse and his son. Another story of Granucci is from the *fabliau Du curé qui posa une pierre*.

ASCANIO MORI DA CENO† was a Mantuan, and passed his life in the service of the Princes of Gonzaga, one of whom he followed to Hungary, when he went to attend the Emperor Maximilian in the wars against Solyman. He was

\* *La piacevol notte e lieto giorno, opera morale di Nicolao Granucci di Lucca.*

† *Prima parte dell' novelle di Ascanio Mori da Ceno.*

an intimate friend of Torquato Tasso, and a curious extract from a letter addressed to him by that poet is given in Black's Life of Tasso (vol. ii. p. 194). Ceno's novels, which are fifteen in number, are dedicated to Vincenzo Gonzaga, Prince of Mantua, noted as the assassin of Crichton and the patron of Tasso. The first part of his work was printed at Mantua, 1585, 4to. From the title it would appear that a second part was intended to have been added, but it was never written, or at least never published. The 3d novel is the common story of a messenger coming express with a pardon to a criminal, but who, having his attention diverted by the execution, which was commencing, does not deliver his orders till all is concluded. The 13th is the still better known story of two young men, who, during their father's absence, pretend that he is dead; they sit in deep mourning and apparent distress, and in consequence receive his country rents from the steward, who arrives with them.

CELIO MALESPINI,\* during his youth, was in some public employment at Milan, but afterwards resided at Venice, and finally passed into the service of Duke Francis of Medici. Malespini was the first person who published the Jerusalem Delivered of Tasso, which he did in a very imperfect and mutilated manner, and without the consent of the poet. His novels, which amount to two hundred, divided into two parts, were written about 1580, and published at Venice in 1609, 4to. He introduces them by telling that a party of ladies and gentlemen, who had fled from Venice during the plague in 1576, met in a palace in the *Contado di Trevizi*, where they chiefly amused themselves with relating stories. In N. 41, of the first part, there is a curious account of the amusements of the Compagnia della Calza, so called from a particular stocking which the members wore. This society, which existed in Italy during the 15th and 16th centuries, was neither, as some have imagined, a chivalrous nor academic institution, but merely an association for the purposes of public and private entertainments, as games, feasts, and theatri-

\* Duecento novelle del Signore Celio Malespini, nel quale si raccontano diversi avvenimenti; così lieti, come mesti e stravaganti.

cal representations. In course of time this university became divided into different fraternities, as the *Compagnia dei Floridi, Sempiterni*, &c. each of which was governed by particular laws and officers, and the members were distinguished by a certain habit.

Few of the tales of Malespini are original: long before the period of their publication, the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles* had been written in France, and almost the whole of these have been inserted by Malespini in his novels; indeed he has translated them all except the 5th, 35th, 36th, 64th, 74th, and 93d. The correspondence of the tales in these two works will be best shown from the following table:—

Malespini.	C. N. N.	Malespini.	C. N. N.
2 . . . . .	is 62	45 . . . . .	3
5 . . . . .	13	46 . . . . .	87
6 . . . . .	97	47 . . . . .	29
8 . . . . .	68	49 . . . . .	37
9 . . . . .	69	57 . . . . .	10
10 . . . . .	53	58 . . . . .	98
14 . . . . .	52	61 . . . . .	88
15 . . . . .	4	65 . . . . .	92
17 . . . . .	33	67 . . . . .	75
18 . . . . .	8	75 . . . . .	60
19 . . . . .	73	78 . . . . .	45
20 . . . . .	27	79 . . . . .	21
23 . . . . .	32	80 . . . . .	14
26 . . . . .	42	81 . . . . .	79
27 . . . . .	44	86 . . . . .	72
32 . . . . .	81	88 . . . . .	23
33 . . . . .	54	90 . . . . .	34
35 . . . . .	59	91 . . . . .	63
36 . . . . .	24	92 . . . . .	78
37 . . . . .	28	93 . . . . .	85
38 . . . . .	19	94 . . . . .	71
39 . . . . .	77	95 . . . . .	83
40 . . . . .	20	97 . . . . .	17
42 . . . . .	58	99 . . . . .	39
43 . . . . .	65	100 . . . . .	48
44 . . . . .	16	101 . . . . .	94

## PART II.

Malespini.	C. N. N.	Malespini.	C. N. N.
1 . . . . .	56	53 . . . . .	1
3 . . . . .	90	56 . . . . .	25
5 . . . . .	55	57 . . . . .	2
7 . . . . .	84	59 . . . . .	96
8 . . . . .	22	61 . . . . .	61
10 . . . . .	31	62 . . . . .	89
12 . . . . .	100	63 . . . . .	57
13 . . . . .	70	66 . . . . .	46
16 . . . . .	47	67 . . . . .	50
18 . . . . .	49	68 . . . . .	12
19 . . . . .	26	70 . . . . .	15
25 . . . . .	51	73 . . . . .	82
27 . . . . .	99	74 . . . . .	80
29 . . . . .	18	75 . . . . .	66
35 . . . . .	67	77 . . . . .	7
40 . . . . .	38	79 . . . . .	76
43 . . . . .	40	81 . . . . .	86
47 . . . . .	6	88 . . . . .	95
49 . . . . .	41	89 . . . . .	11
51 . . . . .	43	96 . . . . .	9
52 . . . . .	30		

Malespini, however, has levied contributions on other works than the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*. By this time the *Diana Enamorada* of Montemayor had appeared in Spain, and three of the longest tales are taken from that pastoral. In the first part, the 25th tale is borrowed from the intricate loves of Ismenia Selvagio and Alanio, related in the *Diana*. The 36th of the second part is the Moorish episode of Xarifa, and the 94th is the story of the shepherdess Belisa. A few are also borrowed from the preceding Italian novelists. The 71st is from the 22d of the last part of *Bandello*, and others may be found in the *Ecatommithi* of *Cinthio*.

ANNIBAL CAMPEGGI lived in the beginning of the 17th century. His first tale is as old as the *Heetopades*, and is the story of the jealous husband who tied his wife to a post. The second is that of the *Widow of Ephesus*, related by *Petronius Arbiter*, and in the *Seven Wise Masters* (see

above, vol. i. p. 102). It has been imitated in Italian by Eustachio Manfredi, in French by St. Evremont and Fontaine, and forms the subject of an English drama of the commencement of the 17th century, entitled *Women's Tears* (Dodsley's Collection, vol. 6). The story has been also inserted by John of Salisbury in his book, *De Nugis Curialibus* (b. 8, c. 11): he reports it as a historical incident, and cites Flavian as his authority for this assertion.

Subsequent to this period, there appeared but few Italian novels, and scarcely any of merit. From this censure I have only to except one striking tale, by Vincenzo Rota, a Paduan gentleman, of the last century. It is the story of a young man who fled from parents, who kept a small inn in a remote part of the Brescian territory. Having in course of time acquired a fortune by industry, he returned after an absence of twenty-five years, but concealed who he was on the first night of his arrival, and not being recognised, is murdered while asleep by his parents, for the sake of the treasure which his father found he had along with him. From the priest of the village, to whom alone their son had discovered himself, they learn with despair, on the following morning, the full extent of their guilt and misery. The tale was first printed by the Count Borromeo, a fellow-citizen of the author, in his *Notizia de Novellieri Italiani da lui posseduti con alcune Novelle inedite Bassano, 1794*. A similar story is related of a Norman innkeeper, in an obscure periodical publication, called the *Visiter*; and also forms the basis of the plot of the *Fatal Curiosity*, a tragedy by Lillo, in three acts, which Mr. Harris, in his *Philological Enquiries*, says, "is the model of a perfect fable." The subject of this piece was taken from an old pamphlet, entitled "*News from Perin, in Cornwall, of a most bloody and unexampled Murther, very lately committed by a Father on his owne Sonne.*" Lillo's *Fatal Curiosity* has been imitated in a more recent tragedy, entitled *The Shipwreck*.

The *Twenty-fourth of February*, by the German dramatist Werner, is founded on a similar incident. A family of peasants residing in the solitudes of Switzerland, was pursued from father to son by a paternal malediction, on



account of a dreadful atrocity committed by one of its forefathers, and was condemned to solemnize the 24th of February by the commission of some horrible crime. The third heir of this accursed generation had been the cause of his father's death on the fatal day. The son of this parricide returning with a treasure to the cottage after a long absence, is not recognised by his parent, and the father, by the murder of his son, for sake of his wealth, at midnight on the 24th of February, again solemnizes this strange anniversary.

No foreign productions have had such influence on English literature, as the early Italian novels with which we have been so long engaged. The best of these stories appeared in an English dress before the close of the reign of Elizabeth, either by direct translation, or through the medium of French and Latin versions. Many of these were printed even before the translation of Belleforest's *Grand Repertory of Tragical Narrations*, which was published towards the end of the 16th century. The paraphrases, abridgements, and translations of Italian novels, contained in Paynter's *Palace of Pleasure*; Whetstone's *Heptameron*; Westward for Smelts; Grimstone's *Admirable Histories*, and other productions of the same nature, afforded a new species of literary gratification, as their merit consisted not merely in romantic invention, but the delineation of character, and an artful arrangement of events. They became the fashionable entertainment of all who yet preserved their relish for fiction, and who professed to read for amusement.

This is apparent even from a passage in the Schoolmaster of Ascham, Queen Elizabeth's celebrated preceptor, who complains, "that ten *La Morte d'Arthures* did not the tenth part so much harm as one of these books made in Italy, and translated in England. And that which is most to be lamented, and therefore more needful to be looked to, there be more of these ungracious books set out in print within these few months, than have been seen in England many score years before." Thus the popularity of these productions shook the fabric of Gothic romance, and directed the thoughts of our writers to new inventions. The legends of the minstrels contained much bold adven-

ture, heroic enterprise, and strong touches of rude, though picturesque delineation; but they were defective in the disposition of circumstances, and those descriptions of characters and events, which, from their nearer analogy to truth, were demanded by a more discerning age. Accordingly, till the Italian novels became current, affecting and natural situations, the combination of incident, and pathos of catastrophe, were utterly unknown; and distress, especially that which arises from the conflicts of the tenderest of the passions, had not yet been exhibited in its most interesting forms. It was from the Italian novelists accordingly that our poets, particularly the dramatic, acquired ideas of a legitimate plot, and the multiplication of events necessary to constitute a tragic or a comic intrigue. We have already seen that the most popular comedies of Shakspeare have been derived, with little improvement in the incidents, from the stories of Boccaccio, Ser Giovanni, Cinthio, and Bandello. The spirit that pervades the works of his contemporary dramatists, has been drawn from similar sources. The gayer inventions of the novelists may often be traced in the sprightly or humorous scenes of Beaumont and Fletcher, and the savage atrocity by which the Italian tales are sometimes distinguished, has unquestionably produced those accumulated horrors which characterize so many dramas of Shirley and of Ford.

But, although the Italian novels had such influence on the general literature of this country, I am not aware that they gave birth to any original work in a similar style of composition. In France, on the other hand, their effect may have been less universal; but, at an early period, they produced works of a similar description, of considerable merit and celebrity.

Of these the earliest is the *CENT NOUVELLES NOUVELLES*, tales which are full of imagination and gaiety, and written in a style the most *naïve* and agreeable: indeed, a good deal of the pleasure derived from their perusal, must be attributed to the wonderful charm of the old French language. They have formed the model of all succeeding tales in that tongue—of those of the Queen of Navarre, and the authors by whom she has been imitated or followed.

These stories were first printed in folio, by Verard, without date, from a MS. of the year 1456. They are said, in the introduction, to have been related by an assemblage of young noblemen, at the court of Burgundy, to which the dauphin, afterwards Lewis XI., retired, during the quarrel with his father. The relaters of these tales are M. Crequi, chamberlain of the duke, the Count de Chatelux, mareschal of France, the Count de Brienne, and a number of others. A few stories are also told by the duke himself, and by the dauphin, who, it is said, took care *de les faire recueillir, et de les publier*. The account of their having been verbally related by these persons of quality, is a fiction; but the fact, I believe, is, that they were written for the entertainment of the dauphin, at the time he retired to the court of Burgundy. Most of them are of a comic nature, and, I think, there are only five tragical tales in the whole collection.

1. Entitled *La Medaille à revers*, is from the Fabliaux *Les Deux Changeurs*, (Le Grand, 4, 173,) but had already been imitated by Ser Giovanni, in the 2d of the 2d of the Pecorone.

3. *La Pêche del' Anneau* has suggested part of the 1st tale in the 6th Night of Straparola.

8. *Garce pour Garce* is from the *Repensa merces* in Poggio's *Facetiae*.

9. *La Mari Maquereau de sa Femme*, a story here told of a knight of Burgundy, is from the Fabliau *Le Meunier d' Aleus*, or the 206th of Sacchetti, (see above, vol. ii. p. 75.) It also corresponds with the 78th of Morlini, and the *Vir sibi cornua promovens* in the *Facetiae* of Poggio.

10. *Les Pastes d' Anguille*, is generally known by Fontaine's imitation under the same title.

11. *L' Encens au Diable*, which was originally told in the *Facetiae* of Poggio, is equally well known as the former story, being the Hans Carvel's ring of Rabelais, Prior, and Fontaine. It is also related in the 5th satire of Ariosto.

12. *Le Veau* is Fontaine's *Villageois qui cherche son veau*, and Poggio's *Asinus perditus*.

14. *Le Faiseur de Papes ou L'Homme de Dieu* is Fontaine's *L'Hermite*.

16. *Le Borgne Aveugle*, here told of a knight of Picardy and his wife, is from the 8th of Petrus Alphonsus, or c. 121 of the *Gesta Romanorum*, (see above, vol. i. p. 388.) It has been imitated in the 23d of the 1st part of *Bandello*, in the Italian novels of Giuseppe Orologi, entitled *Successi Varii*, lately published by Borromeo in his *Notizie*, and in the 6th of the *Queen of Navarre*, where, as in *Orologi*, the husband is a domestic of Charles, Duke of Alençon.

19. *L'Enfant de Neige* is from the *Fabliau de L'Enfant qui fondit au Soleil*, (*Le Grand*, vol. iii. p. 86.)

21. *L'Abbesse Guerie* is Fontaine's *L'Abbesse Malade*.

23. *La Procureuse passe la Raye* has been taken from the *Fabliau du Curé qui posa une Pierre*, (*Le Grand*, vol. iii. p. 249.)

24. *La Botte Ademi*, is the story of a young woman, who being pursued and overtaken in a wood by an amorous knight, and seeing no hope of escape, offers to remain if he will allow her to pull off his boots: This being agreed to, she draws one of them half off, and thus effects her escape. This is part of the subject of an old English ballad, entitled, *The Baffled Knight, or Lady's Policy*, published in *Percy's Relics*.

32. *Les Dames Dismées* is the *Cordeliers de Catalogne* of Fontaine.

34. *Seigneur Dessus—Seigneur Dessous* is the *Fabliau Du Clerc qui se cacha derriere un Coffre*, (*Le Grand*, vol. iii. p. 303.)

37. *Le Benetrier d'Ordure* is Fontaine's *On ne s'Avise jamais de tout*.

38. *Une Verge pour l'Autre* is from the 8th of the 7th of Boccaccio. (See above, vol. ii. p. 46.)

50. *Change pour Change*. This is the story which Sterne, in his *Tristram Shandy*, (vol. iv. c. 29,) says, is told by Selden. It was originally the 14th of *Sacchetti*, but there the woman is the young man's stepmother, instead of his grandmother.—“E questo,” says he in his defence, “mio padre che ebbe a fare cotanto tempo con mia madre, e mai non gli disse una parola torta; ed ora

perche mi ha trovato giacer con la moglie mi vuole uccidere come voi vedete." This is also the *Justa Excusatio* of the *Facetiae* of Poggio.

52. *Les Trois Monumens*, is merely translated from the 16th tale of Sacchetti. It is the story of a son who receives three advices from his father, which he disregards, and the consequences of his disobedience.

60. *Les Nouveaux freres Mineurs* is from the Fabliau *Frere Denise Cordelier*, (Le Grand, vol. iii. p. 395.)

61. *Le Cocu Dupé*, from the first part of the Fabliau *Les Cheveux coupés*, by the *Trouveur* Guerin, (Le Grand, vol. ii. p. 280.)

69. *L'Honneste femme a Deux Maris*. A young gentleman of Flanders, while in the service of the king of Hungary, was taken prisoner and made a slave by the Turks. He had left a beautiful wife behind him in his own country, who, when all hopes of her husband's return had vanished, was courted by many suitors. She long resisted their importunities, still fondly hoping that her husband was yet alive. At length, at the end of nine years, she was in a manner forced by his and her own relations to enter into a second marriage. A few months after the celebration of the nuptials, her first husband having escaped from slavery, arrived at Artois, and his wife hearing the intelligence, expired in paroxysms of despair. This is obviously the origin of Southern's celebrated tragedy of *Isabella*, and perhaps of the history of *Donna Mencia de Mosquera*, the lady whom *Gil Blas* delivers from the cave of the robbers.

78. *Le Mari Confesseur* is the Fabliau *du Chevalier qui fist sa femme confesser*: (Le Grand, vol. iv. p. 90,) for the various transmigrations of this story, (see above vol. ii. p. 42.)

79. *L'Ane Retrouvé* is the *Circulator* of Poggio.

80. *La Bonne Mesure* corresponds with Poggio's *Aselli Priapus*.

85. *Le Curé Cloué*, from the first part of the Fabliau *le Forgeron de Creil*, (Le Grand, 4, 124.)

88. *Le Cocu Sauvê*, from Fabliau *La Borgoise d'Orleans*, (Le Grand, 4, p. 287.) This is the *Fraus Muliebris* of Poggio.



90. *La Bonne Malade* is Poggio's *Venia rite Negata*.

91. *La Femme Obeissante* is his *Novum Supplicii* genus.

93. *La Postilone sur le Dos* is his *Quomodo calceis* *Parcatur*.

95. *Le Doit du Moine Gueri* is Poggio's *Digiti Tumor*. It thus appears that many of the *Cent Nouvelles* coincide with the *Facetiae*. I do not believe, however, that they were borrowed from that production, as they were written nearly at the same period that the *Facetiae* were related by Poggio and other clerks of the Roman chancery in the *Buggiale* of the Vatican; both were probably derived from stories which had become current in France and Italy by means of the *Fabliaux* of the *Trouveurs*.

96. *Le Testament Cynique*. A curate having buried his dog in the churchyard, is threatened with punishment by his superior. Next day he brings the prelate fifty crowns, which he says the dog had saved from his earnings, and bequeathed to the bishop in his testament. This story, which corresponds with the *Canis Testamentum* in Poggio's *Facetiae*, is from *Le Testament de l' Ane*, (*Le Grand*, vol. iii. p. 107,) a *fabliau* of the *Trouveur* *Rutebeuf*, to whom it probably came from the East, as it is told by a very ancient Turkish poet, *Lamai*, also called *Abdallah Ben Mamoud*, author of a collection of *Facetiae* and *Bon Mots*, in five chapters. It has been imitated in *Le Chien de Sahed*, one of *Gueulette's Contes Tartares*, and is also told in the history of *Don Raphael*, in *Gil Blas*.

It is thus evident that a great proportion of the *Cent Nouvelles* are derived from those inexhaustible stores of fiction, the *Fabliaux* of the *Trouveurs*; and as only a small selection has been published by *Le Grand* and *Barbazan*, it may be conjectured that many more are borrowed from *fabliaux* which have not yet seen the light, and may probably remain for ever buried in the French libraries.

The *Cent Nouvelles* never were translated into English: *Beatrice*, indeed, in *Much Ado about Nothing*, suspects she will be told she had her good wit out of the *Hundred Merry Tales*, which led *Shakspeare's* commentators to suppose that this might be some version of



the Cent Nouvelles, which was fashionable in its day, but had afterwards disappeared. An old black-letter book, however, entitled, "A Hundreth Mery Tales," to which Beatrice probably alludes, was lately picked up from a bookseller's stall in England, and it proves to be a totally different work from the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles.

The Tales of the Queen of Navarre, written in imitation of the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, were first published under the title of *Histoire des Amans Fortunés*, in 1558, which was nine years after the death of their author.

These stories are the best known and most popular in the French language, a celebrity for which they were probably as much indebted to the rank and distinguished character of the author, as to their intrinsic merit. The manner in which they are introduced, is sufficiently ingenious, and bears a considerable resemblance to the frame of the Canterbury Tales. In the month of September, the season in which the baths of the Pyrenees begin to have some efficacy, a number of French ladies and gentlemen assembled at the springs of Caulderets. At the time when it was customary to return, there came rains so uncommon and excessive, that a party who made an attempt to arrive at Therbes, in Gascony, finding the streams swollen, and all the bridges broken down, were obliged to seek shelter in the monastery De Notre Dame de Serrance, on the Pyrenees. Here they were forced to remain till a bridge should be thrown over an impassable stream. As they were assured that this work would occupy ten days, they resolved to amuse themselves meanwhile with relating stories every day, from noon till vespers, in a beautiful meadow near the banks of the river Gave.

The number of the company amounted to ten, and there were ten stories related daily; the amusement was intended also to have lasted ten days, in order to complete the hundred novels, whence the book has been sometimes called *Les Cent Nouvelles de la Reine de Navarre*; but, in fact, it stops at the 73d tale, near the commencement of the 8th day. The conversations on the characters and incidents of the last related tale, and which generally introduce the subject of the new one, are much longer than in the Italian novels, and, indeed, occupy nearly one half

of the work. Some of the remarks are quaint and comical, others are remarkable for their *naïveté*, while a few breathe the conceits of the Italian sonnetteers: thus, "it is said that jealousy is love, but I deny it, for though jealousy be produced by love, as ashes are by fire, yet jealousy extinguishes love, as ashes smother the flame."

Of the tales themselves, few are original; for, except about half a dozen which are historically true, and are mentioned as having fallen under the knowledge and observation of the Queen of Navarre, they may be traced to the Fabliaux, the Italian novels, and the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles. Few are either of a serious or atrocious description—they consist for the most part in contrivances for assignations—amorous assaults ingeniously repelled—intrigues ingeniously accomplished or ludicrously detected. Through the whole work, the monks, especially the Cordeliers, are treated with much severity, and are represented as committing, and sometimes with impunity, even when discovered, the most cruel, deceitful, and immoral actions. When we have already seen ecclesiastical characters treated with much contumely by private writers, in the age, and near the seat, of papal supremacy, it will not excite surprise that they should be so represented by a queen, who was a favourer of the new opinions, and an enemy to the Romish superstitions.

But while so many tales of the Queen of Navarre have been borrowed from earlier productions, they appear in their turn to have suggested much to subsequent writers. Thus, the 8th tale, which is from the fabliau of *Le Meunier d'Aleus*, and also occurs in the *Facetiae* of Poggio, in *Sacchetti*, and the 9th of the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, seems the version of the story which has suggested the plot of Shirley's comedy of the *Gamester*, (afterwards printed under the title of *The Gamesters*,) where Mrs. Wilding substitutes herself for Penelope, with whom her husband had an assignation, and he, to discharge a game debt, gives up the adventure to his friend Hazard. The 36th story, concerning the President of Grenoble, which is taken from the 6th novel of the 3d decade of Cinthio, or the 47th of the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, has suggested to the same dramatist that part of his *Love's Cruelty*,

which turns on the concealment of Hippolito's intrigue with Clariana, by the contrivance of her husband.

The 30th coincides with the 35th of the 2d part of *Bandello*, and the plot of Walpole's *Mysterious Mother*, (see above, vol. ii. p. 129.)

38. Which was originally the 72d tale of Morlini, is the story of a lady whose husband went frequently to a farm he had in the country. His wife suspecting the cause of his absence, sends provisions and all accommodations to the mistress for whose sake he went to the farm, in order to provide for the next visit, which has the effect of recalling the alienated affections of her husband. This story is in the MS. copy of the *Varii Successi of Orologi*, mentioned by Borromeo. The French and Italian tales agree in the most minute circumstances, even in the name of the place where the lady resided, which is Tours in both. This tale is related in a colloquy of Erasmus, entitled *Uxor Μεμφαγαμος* sive *Conjugium*. It also occurs in Albion's England, a poem, by William Warner, who was a celebrated writer in the reign of Queen Elizabeth: those stanzas, which contain the incident, have been extracted from that poetical epitome of British history, and published in Percy's *Relics*, under the title of the Patient Countess.

*La Servante Justifiée of Fontaine*, is from the 45th novel of this collection. It was probably taken from the fabliau of some *Trouveur*, who had obtained it from the East, as it corresponds with the story of the shopkeeper's wife in Nakshebi's Persian tales, known by the name of *Tooti Nameh*, or *Tales of a Parrot*. Another tale of the Queen of Navarre has a striking resemblance to the story of Theodosius and Constantia, whose loves and misfortunes have been immortalized by Addison and Sterne.

There were few works of any celebrity, written in France in imitation of the tales of the Queen of Navarre. The stories in the *Nouvelles Recreations ou Contes Nouveaux* have been generally attributed to Bonaventure des Perriers, one of the domestics of that princess; but in the edition 1733, it was shown that they were written by Nicholas Denysot, a French painter. They are not so long as those of the Queen of Navarre, and consist for the most

part in epigrammatic conclusions, brought about by a very short relation. It is amusing, however, to trace in them the rudiments of our most ordinary jest books. The following story, which occurs in the *Nouvelles Recreations*, may be found in almost every production of the kind from the *Facetiae* of Hierocles, to the last *Encyclopædia* of Wit. An honest man in Poitiers sent his two sons for their improvement to Paris. After some time they both fell sick; one died, and the survivor, in a letter to his father, said, "This is to acquaint you that it is not I who am dead, but my brother William, though it be very true that I was worse than he." It has been said that Porson once intended to publish Joe Miller with a commentary, in order to show that all his jests were derived originally from the Greek. This he could not have done, but they may be all easily traced to Greek authors, the *Eastern Tales*, or the French and Italian novels of the 15th and 16th centuries.

Among the French tales of the 16th century may be mentioned the *Contes Amoureux* of Jeanne Flore; *Le Printemps de Jaques Yver*, published in 1572; *L' Eté de Benigne Poissenot*, 1583, and *Les Facetieuses Journées*, of Gabriel Chapuis.

The more serious and tragic relations of the Italians were diffused in France during the 16th century, by means of the well-known work of Belleforest, and were imitated in the *Histoires Tragiques* of Rosset, one of whose stories is the foundation of the most celebrated drama of Ford, who has indeed chosen a revolting subject, yet has represented perhaps in too fascinating colours the loves of Giovanni and Annabella.

*Les Histoires Prodigieuses de Boaistuan*, published in 1561, seems to be the origin of such stories as appear in the *Wonders of Nature*, *Marvellous Magazine*, &c. We are assured that, in the Hebrides, wheat grows on the tops of the trees, and that the leaves, when they fall to the ground, are immediately changed to singing birds: there are besides a good many relations of monstrous births. There is also the common story of a person who was drowned by mistaking the echo of his own cry, for the voice of another. Arriving on the bank of a river, he

asked loudly, "S'il n'y avoit point de peril a passer?—*Passez. Est ce par ici?—par ici.*"

Towards the close of the 16th, and beginning of the 17th century, a prodigious multitude of tales were written in Spain, in imitation of the Italian novels: "Troppo in lungo anderebbe," says Lampillas, (*Saggio Storico del. let. Spagnuola*, part ii. tom. 3, p. 195,) "se io volessi accennare il portentoso numero di novelle Spagnuole uscite a quei tempi, e trasportate nelle pui colte lingue d' Europa." These Spanish novels are generally more detailed in the incidents than their Italian models, and have also received very considerable modifications from the manners and customs of the country in which they were produced. Those compositions, which in Italy presented alternate pictures of savage revenge, licentious intrigue, and gross buffoonry, are characterized by a high romantic spirit of gallantry, and jealousy of family honour, but above all, by constant nocturnal scuffles on the streets. The tales of Gerardo, the *Novelas Exemplares* of Cervantes, the *Prodigios y Successos d'Amor* of Montalvan, and the *Novelas Amorasas* of Camerino, all written towards the end of the 16th, or commencement of the 17th century, are scarcely less interesting than the French or Italian tales, in illustrating the manners of the people, the progress of fiction, and its transmission from the novelist to the dramatic poet. Beaumont and Fletcher have availed themselves as much of the novels of Gerardo and Cervantes, as of the tales of Cinthio or Bandello, and many of their most popular productions, as the *Spanish Curate*, *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*, *Chances*, *Love's Pilgrimage*, and *Fair Maid of the Inn*, may be easily traced to a Spanish original. I fear, however, that to protract this investigation would be more curious than profitable, as enough has already been said to establish the rapid and constant progress of the stream of fiction, during the periods in which we are engaged, and its frequent transfusion from one channel of literature to another.

Indeed, I have perhaps already occupied the reader longer than at first may seem proper or justifiable, with the subject of Italian tales, and the imitations of them. But, besides their own intrinsic value, as pictures of morals



and of manners, other circumstances contributed to lead me into this detail. In no other species of writing is the transmission of fable, and, if I may say so, the commerce of literature, so distinctly marked. The larger works of fiction resemble those productions of a country which are consumed within itself, while tales, like the more delicate and precious articles of traffic, which are exported from their native soil, have gladdened and delighted every land. They are the ingredients from which Shakspeare, and other enchanterers of his day, have distilled those magical drops which tend so much to sweeten the lot of humanity, by occasionally withdrawing the mind from the cold and naked realities of life, to visionary scenes and visionary bliss.

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## CHAPTER IX.

Origin of Spiritual Romance—*Legenda Aurea*—*Contes Devots*  
*Guerino Meschino*—*Lycidas et Cleorithe*—*Romans de Camus, &c.*  
 —Pilgrim's Progress.

WE have now travelled over those fields of fiction, which have been cultivated by the writers of chivalry and the Italian novelists; but the task remains of surveying those other regions which the industry of succeeding times has explored, and I have yet to give some account of those different classes of romance which appeared in France and other countries of Europe, previous to the introduction of the modern novel.

It has already been remarked, that the variations of romance correspond in a considerable degree with the variations of manners. Something, indeed, must be allowed to the caprice of taste, and something to the accidental direction of an original genius to a particular pursuit; but still amid the variety, there is a certain uniformity, and when the character of an age or people is decided, it must give a tinge to the taste, and a direction to the efforts, of those who court attention or favour, and who have them-



selves been nourished in existing prejudices and in commonly received opinions.

Of the natural principles of the human mind, none are more obvious than a spirit of religion ; and in certain periods of society, and under certain circumstances, this sentiment has been so prevalent as to constitute a feature in the character of the age. It was to be expected, therefore that a feeling so general and powerful should have been gratified in every mode, and that, amongst others, the easy and magical charm of fiction should have formed one of the methods by which it was fostered and indulged.

In the times which succeeded the early ages of Christianity, the gross ignorance of many of its votaries rendered them but ill qualified to relish the abstract truths of religion, or unadorned precepts of morality. The plan was accordingly adopted of adducing examples, which might interest the attention and speak strongly to the feelings. Hence, from the zeal of some, and the artifice or credulity of other instructors, mankind were taught the duties of devotion by a recital of the achievements of spiritual knight errantry.

The history of Josaphat and Barlaam, of which an account has already been given, and which was written to inspire a taste for the ascetic virtues, seems to have been the origin of Spiritual Romance. It is true, that in the first ages of the church, many fictitious gospels were composed, full of improbable fables ; but, as they contained opinions in contradiction to what was deemed the orthodox faith, they were discountenanced by the fathers of the church, and soon fell into disrepute. On the other hand, the history of Josaphat and Barlaam, which was more sound in its doctrine, passed at an early period into the west of Europe, and through the medium of the old Latin translation, which was a common manuscript, and was even printed so early as the year 1470, it became a very general favourite.

As far back as the fourth century, St. Athanasius visited Rome, in order to obtain succour from the western church against the Arian heresy, which then prevailed in the East ; and during his abode in Italy, he wrote the life of

St. Anthony, the most renowned Cenobite of the age. From the earliest periods of the church, innumerable legends had been written or compiled by Gregory of Tours and St. Gregory, selections from which have been more recently published under the title of *Vies des peres de desert*. All these legends present nearly the same circumstances—the victims of monastic superstition invariably retire to solitude, where they make themselves as uncomfortable as they can by every species of penance and mortification; they are alternately terrified and tempted by the demon, over whom they invariably prevail; their solitude is interrupted by those who come to admire them, which must have been the great motive for perseverance; they all cure diseases, and wash the feet of lepers: they foresee their own decease, and, spite of their efforts and prayers, their existence is usually protracted to a preternatural duration.

One peculiarity in the history of these saints is the dominion which they exercise over the animal creation. Thus St. Helenus, who dwelt in the deserts of Egypt, arriving one Sabbath at a monastery on the banks of the Nile, was justly scandalized to find that mass was not to be performed that day. The monks excused themselves on the ground that their priest, who was on the opposite side of the river, hesitated to cross on account of a crocodile which had posted himself on the bank, and was, with some reason, suspected to be lying in wait for the holy man. Saint Helenus immediately went in quest of the crocodile, and commanded the animal to ferry him over on his back to the other side of the river, where he found the priest; but could not persuade this man of little faith to embark with him on the crocodile. He accordingly repassed alone, but being in very bad humour at the ultimate failure of his expedition, he commanded the crocodile to expire without farther delay, an injunction which the monster fulfilled with due expedition and humility.

St. Florentin finding that the solitude to which he had withdrawn was more than he could endure, begged some solace from heaven. One day, accordingly, after prayer in the fields, he found at his return a bear stationed at the entrance to his cell. On the approach of St. Florentin the

bear made his obeisance, and so far from exhibiting any symptoms of a natural moroseness, he testified, as well as his imperfect education permitted, that he stood there for the service of the holy man. Our saint, however, received so much pleasure from his company, that he feared incurring a violation of his oaths of penance: he therefore resolved to abstain from the society of the bear during the greater part of the day. As there were five or six sheep in his cavern, which no one led out to pasture, the idea struck the saint of having them tended by the bear. This flock at first showed some repugnance; but, encouraged by the assurances of the saint, and mild demeanour of the shepherd, they followed him pleasantly to the fold. St. Florentin usually enjoined his bear to bring them back at six, but on days of great fasting and prayer, he commanded him not to return till nine. The bear was punctual to his time, and whether his master appointed six or nine, this exemplary animal never confounded the hours, nor mistook one for the other!

This miracle continued for some years, but at length the demon, envious of the proficiency of the bear, prompted certain evil-disposed monks in the vicinity, who at his instigation laid snares and slew him. The saint could do no more than curse the unknown perpetrators of this act, who in consequence all died next day of putrid disorders.

Perhaps one cause of the popularity of these legends was the frequent details concerning the sexual temptations to which the saints were exposed. The holy men were usually triumphant, and almost the only example to the contrary is that of Saint Macarius. This saint, when far advanced in life, resolved to retire from the world, leaving his wife and family to shift for themselves. The angel Raphael pointed out to him a frightful solitude, where he chose as his residence a cavern inhabited by two young lions which had been exposed by their mother. After he had lived here many years, the demon became envious of his virtue, and seduced him under form of a beautiful female, a figure which he assumes with great facility. St. Macarius somehow instantly perceived the full extent of the iniquity into which he had been ensnared, and was, as

may be believed, in the utmost consternation. The lions, though not aware of the whole calamity, were so much scandalized at his conduct, that they forsook the cavern. They returned, however, soon after, and dug a ditch the length of a human body. The repentant sinner, conceiving this to be the species of penance which these animals considered most suitable to his transgression, lay down in the hole, where the lions, with much solemnity and lamentation, covered him with earth, except head and arms. In this position he remained three years, subsisting on the herbs which grew within arm's length. At the end of this period, who should reappear but the two lions, who dug out their old master with the same gravity they had employed at his interment. This was accepted by the saint as a sign that his sins were forgiven, a conjecture which was confirmed by the appearance of our Saviour at the entrance of the cavern. Henceforth Macarius distrusted every woman; and indeed the continence of the saints must have been wonderfully aided by their knowledge of the demon's power to assume this fascinating figure, as they would constantly dread being thus entrapped into the embraces of the common enemy of mankind.

The legends resembling those above mentioned, which were chiefly of Latin invention, were probably little countenanced under the more mild and rational institutions of St. Benedict, the first founder of the monastic orders; but were subsequently drawn from obscurity, to support the system of the ascetic followers of St. Francis.

Besides the Latin legends, many forgeries by the monks of the Greek church were from time to time imported into France and Italy. To such writers the oriental fictions and mode of fabling were familiar, and hence we find that from imitation the western legends of the saints frequently resemble a romance, both in the structure and decorations of the story. Even the more early Latin lives had been carried to Constantinople, where they were translated into Greek, with new embellishments of Eastern imagination. These being returned to Europe, were restored to their native language, and superseded the more simple originals. Other Latin legends, of still later composition,

acquired their decorations from the Arabian fictions, which had at length become current in Europe.

Such romantic inventions were admirably suited to serve the purposes of superstition. Many extravagant conceptions, too, were likely to arise spontaneously in the visionary minds of the authors. A believing and ignorant age, also, received as truth, what in the lives of the saints was sometimes only intended as allegory. The malignant spirit, so troublesome at bed and board to the monks and anchorites, might only have signified, that even in the desert we in vain seek for tranquillity, that temptations ever pursue, and that our passions assail us as strongly in the gloom of solitude, as in the revelry of the world. Imitators, whose penetration was inferior to their credulity, quickly invented similar relations, from which no instruction could be drawn, nor allegory deduced.

The grand repertory of pious fiction seems to have been the *Legenda Aurea* of Jacobus de Voragine, a Genoese Dominican,—a work entitled *Golden* from its popularity, on the same principle that this epithet was bestowed on the *Ass* of Apuleius. A similar composition in Greek, by Simon Metaphrastes, written about the end of the 10th century, was the prototype of this work of the 13th century, which comprehends the lives of individual saints, whose history had already been written, or was current from tradition. The *Golden Legend*, however, does not consist solely of the biography of saints, but is said in the Colophon to be interspersed with many other beautiful and strange relations, which were probably extracted from the *Gesta Longobardorum*, and other sources too obscure and voluminous to be easily traced; indeed one of the original titles of the *Legenda Aurea* was *Historia Lombardica*. The work of Voragine was translated into French by Jean de Vignai, and was one of the three books from which Caxton's *Golden Legend* was compiled.

From the storehouse of Jacobus de Voragine, the history of well known saints was subsequently extracted. There we find the account of St. George and the Dragon, and also of the Sleepers of Ephesus;—a story which Gibbon has not disdained to introduce into his history (c.



33), and so universal, that it has been related in the Koran. The life of Paul, originally written by St. Jerome, occurs in the *Legenda*, and the abridgement given by Professor Porson, in his letters to Archdeacon Travis (p. 30), may serve as a specimen of the nature of the incidents related in the *Golden Legend*.

“Anthony thought himself the most perfect monk in the world, till he was told in a vision, that there was one much more perfect than he, and that he must set out on a visit to the prince of anchorites. Anthony departed on this errand, and in his journey through a desert saw a centaur. Jerome modestly doubts whether it was the natural produce of the soil, fruitful in monsters, or whether the devil assumed this shape to fright the holy man. Some time after he saw a satyr, with a horned forehead and goat’s feet, who presented him with some dates, as hostages of peace, and confessed that he was one of the false deities whom the deluded Gentiles worshipped. At last, Anthony, quite weary and exhausted, found Paul, and, while they were discoursing together, who should appear on a sudden, but a raven, with a loaf, which he laid down in their sight. ‘Every day,’ said Paul to Anthony, ‘I receive half a loaf: but on your arrival Christ has given his soldiers double provision.’ He also told Anthony that he himself should shortly die; he therefore desired to be buried in the same cloak that Anthony received from Athanasius. Anthony set out full speed to fetch the cloak, but Paul was dead before his return. Here was a fresh distress; Anthony could find no spade nor pickaxe to dig a grave. But while he was in this perplexity, two lions approached with so piteous a roaring, that he perceived they were lamenting the deceased after their unpolished fashion. They then began to scratch the earth with their feet, till they had hollowed a place big enough to contain a single body. After Anthony had buried his friend’s carcass in this hole, the two lions came, and by their signs and fawning, asked his blessing, which he kindly gave them, and they departed in very good humour.”

The *Tresor de l’Ame* is somewhat of the same description with the *Legenda Aurea*. It was translated from Latin into French, and printed in the end of the 15th cen-



ture; but had been composed nearly two hundred years before that period. This work consists of a collection of histories, but it more frequently reports miracles operated on proper application, by the posthumous intercession of saints, than prodigies performed in the course of their lives. The longest article is an account of St. Patrick's purgatory, which is mentioned in the *Legenda Aurea*, but is here minutely described from the recital of a Spanish knight, who had been sent thither to expiate his crimes.

Besides the legends of the saints, a species of spiritual tales (*Contes Devots*), some in prose, and others in verse, was prevalent in France during the 12th and 13th centuries. These were probably written with a view of counteracting the effects of the witty and licentious tales of the *Trouveurs* and minstrels. They were mostly the production of monks, who believed the absurdities they heard, or scrupled not to invent new ones, to raise the reputation of the relics of their convents.

The most ancient collection of spiritual tales, is ascribed by some to Ceriton, an English monk of the 12th century; and by others to Hugo de St. Victoire, a Parisian. It contains a mixture of *Æsopian* fable, with a great variety of pious and profane histories. There is a long account of a kind of wren, named after St. Martin. One day, while sitting on a tree, this animal, which had long and slender legs, exclaimed in the fullness of its pride, "It matters not to me though the heavens fall, for, by aid of my strong limbs, I shall be able to support them." Presently a leaf dropped from the tree, and the foolish boaster immediately flew away, exclaiming, "St. Martin! St. Martin! help your poor bird!"

Le Grand mentions two subsequent collections of spiritual tales in French verse, the first by Coinsi, or Comsi, Prior of a monastery at Soissons, who died in 1236. Many of the tales in this metrical compilation had been originally written in Latin by Hugues Farsi, who was also a monk of Soissons. A great proportion of the stories of Farsi relates to miracles performed in the neighbourhood of Soissons by the Virgin, and in her fall by one of her slippers preserved in the monastery. These Comsi has translated into French rhyme, adding some others on

devout topics, furnished by tradition, or invented by himself, and has given to the whole the title of *Miracles de Notre Dame*. The devil, incensed against him (as the author himself informs us,) on account of the good which his work was likely to produce, tried to choke him one day; fortunately he had time to make the sign of the cross, but some time after the disappointed fiend stole from him certain valuable relics he possessed.

The second compilation alluded to by Le Grand, is entitled *Vies des Peres*, either because it relates the spiritual adventures of hermits, or because it is partly extracted from the *Vies des Peres du Desert*. The tales in this collection are said by Le Grand to be far superior to those of Comsi, both in the choice of subjects and the art of narrative. It accordingly has furnished Le Grand with the best of these stories published under the title of *Contes Devots*, and which form a species of continuation or supplement to his *Contes et Fabliaux*.

Formerly the lives of the saints, and the miracles operated by their relics, had been the favourite topics; but, towards the end of the 11th, and in the course of the subsequent centuries, the wonders performed by the Virgin became the prevailing theme. To her a peculiar reverence was at that time paid in France. A number of cathedrals and monasteries were dedicated to her honour, and she became the object of the most fervent worship. Hence she appears as the heroine of the histories of Farsi, the metrical compositions of Comsi, and the *Lives of the Fathers*. In all these works there were attributed to her an infinite love towards man,—a power almost omnipotent in heaven,—and an inclination, not only to preserve the souls, but to husband the reputations of the greatest criminals, provided she had been treated by them with proper deference and respect.

A young and handsome nun, we are told, was the vestry-keeper of a convent, and part of her daily employment was to ring for matins. In her way to the chapel for this purpose, she was obliged to pass through a gallery, where there stood an image of the Virgin, which she never failed to salute with an Ave. The devil, meanwhile, who had

plotted the ruin of this nun, insidiously whispered in her ear that she would be much happier in the world, than detained in perpetual imprisonment; that, with the advantages of youth and beauty which she possessed, there were no pleasures she might not procure, and that it would be time enough to immure herself in a convent when age should have withered her charms. At the same time the tempter rendered the chaplain enamoured of the nun he had been thus seducing, who, having been already prepared for love solicitations, was easily persuaded to elope with him. For this purpose, she appointed the chaplain a rendezvous on the following night at the convent gate. She accordingly came to the place of assignation; but, having as usual said an Ave to the Virgin in passing through the gallery, she met at the gate a woman of severe aspect, who would not permit her to proceed. On the following night the same prayer having been repeated, a similar obstacle was presented. The chaplain having now become impatient, sent an emissary to complain, and having learned the reason of his mistress not holding her appointment, advised her to pass through the gallery without her wonted Avemaria, and even to turn away from the image of the Virgin. Our nun was not sufficiently hardened to follow these instructions literally, but proceeded to the rendezvous by a different way, and of course met with no impediment in her elopement with the chaplain.

Still the Aves she had said from the time of her entrance into the convent were not thrown away; Our Lady was determined that the shame of so faithful a servant should not be divulged. She assumed the clothes and form of her votary; and, during the absence of the fugitive, assiduously discharged all her employments, by guarding the vestments, ringing the bells, lighting the lamps, and singing in the choir.

After ten years spent in the dissipation of the world, the fugitive nun, tired of libertinism, abandoned the companion of her flight, and conceived the design of returning to the monastery to perform penance. On the way to her former residence, she arrived one night at a house not far distant from the convent, and was charitably received.

After supper a conversation having arisen on various topics, she took an opportunity of inquiring what was said of the vestry-keeper of the neighbouring monastery, who had eloped about ten years before with the chaplain. The mistress of the house was much scandalized at the question, and replied that never had pure virtue been so shamefully calumniated; that the nun to whom she alluded was a perfect model of sanctity; and that Heaven itself seemed to bear witness to her merits, for that she wrought miracles daily.

This discourse was a mystery for the penitent; she passed the night in prayer, and in the morning repaired, in much agitation, to the porch of the convent. A nun appeared and asked her name. "I am a sinful woman," she replied, "who am come hither for the sake of penance;" and then she confessed her elopement and the errors of her life. "I," said the pretended nun, "am Mary, whom you faithfully served, and who, in return, have here concealed your shame." The Virgin then declared that she had discharged the duties of vestry-keeper, exhorted the nun to repentance, and restored her the religious habit which she had left at her elopement. After this the Virgin disappeared, and the nun resumed her functions without any one suspecting what had happened. Nor would it ever have been known had she not herself disclosed it. The sisters loved her the more for her adventure, and esteemed her doubly, as she was manifestly under the special protection of the Mother of God.

In this tale, of which there are different metrical versions, and which also occurs in the *Tresor de l'Ame*, it will be remarked that the Virgin acts as a housemaid; in another story she performs the part of a procuress, and in a third she officiates in an obstetrical capacity to an abbess, who had been frail and imprudent. Indeed, she is in general represented as performing the most degrading offices, and for the most worthless characters.

While the Virgin is the heroine in these compositions, the devil is usually the principal male performer. The monks of a certain monastery wished to ornament the gate of their church. One of their number, who was Sacristan, and who understood sculpture, placed on it a

beautiful image of the Virgin. In most of the churches built in the time of these spiritual fablers, there was a representation of the Last Judgment near the entrance. Our Saviour appeared on that occasion in the design of the Sacristan, with the elect on his right-hand, and the damned on his left. Among the latter was a Satan, armed with an iron hook, and so hideous that no one could look on him without horror. The original, offended at the liberties which had been used with his figure, came one day to inquire at the artist why he had made him so ill-favoured. The Sacristan plainly told him it had been done from personal dislike, and for the express purpose of rendering him odious. These reasons not appearing satisfactory, the Enemy threatened him with vengeance if he did not change the figure in the course of the day. Next morning, when the devil came to look at the alterations, he found the Sacristan mounted on a scaffold, and employed in adding new horrors to the representation. "Since you are determined that we should be foes," exclaimed the irritated demon, "let us see how you can leap." With these words he overthrew the scaffolding; but the Sacristan had no sooner called the Virgin to his succour, than her image stretched out its arms to uphold him, and, after suspending him some time in the air to give the beholders time to admire this beautiful miracle, she placed him gently on the ground, to Satan's infinite shame and mortification. Though humiliated by this failure, he did not renounce his schemes of vengeance, but adopted a new plan, which, at least, reflected more honour on his ingenuity than the overthrow of the scaffold.

Near the monastery there resided a young and devout widow, and between her and the Sacristan the Tempter excited a reciprocal attachment. The lovers resolved to fly to a foreign land, and the monk annexed to this design the scheme of carrying with him the treasures of the convent. They eloped at an appointed hour, and the Sacristan, according to his plan, carried off the cross, the chalices, and censers. Meanwhile the fiend was on watch, and scarcely had his enemy cleared the precincts of the monastery, when he ran through all the dormitories, calling out that a monk was carrying off the treasures of the



abbey. The fugitives were pursued and taken, but the lady was permitted to retire unmolested. "This," adds the fabler, "would not happen in these days; there are few monks at present who would not have profited by the embarrassment of the fair captive."

As for the Sacristan, he was conducted to a dungeon. There the devil suddenly appeared to insult his misfortunes, but at the same time suggested a mode of reconciliation. "Efface," said he, "the villanous figure you have drawn, give me a handsome one in exchange, and I promise to extricate you from this embarrassment." The offer tempted the monk; instantly his chains fell off, and he went to sleep in his own cell. Next morning the astonishment of his brethren was excessive when they beheld him going at large, and busied with his usual employments. They seized him and brought him back to his dungeon, but what was their surprise to find the devil occupying the place of the Sacristan, and with head bent down, and arms crossed on his breast, assuming a devout and penitential appearance. The matter having been reported to the abbot, he came in procession to the dungeon, with cross and holy water. Satan, of course, had to decamp, *volens volens*, but signalized his departure by seizing the abbot by the hood, and carrying him up into the air. Fortunately for the father he was so fat that he slipped through his clothes, and fell naked in the midst of the assembly, while the fiend only carried off the cowl, which, on account of his horns, proved perfectly useless to him.

It was of course believed that the robbery had been committed by the demon in shape of the Sacristan, who soon after fulfilled his promise of forming a handsome statue of his old enemy and late benefactor. "This tale," says the author, "was read every year in the monastery of the White Monks for *their edification*."

The monks gave to the devil a human form, hideous, however, and disgusting. In the miniatures of manuscripts, the paintings in cloisters, and figures on the gates and windows of churches, he is represented as a black withered man, with a long tail, and claws to his feet and hands. It



was also believed that he felt much mortification in being thus portrayed.

One of the most celebrated stories in the spiritual tales, is "De l'Hermite qu' un Ange conduisit dans le Siecle." It is not in the collection of Comsi, but occurs in the Vies des Pères, whence it has been abstracted by Le Grand.

A hermit, who had lived in solitude and penance from his earliest youth, began at length to murmur against Heaven, because he had not been raised to one of those happy and brilliant conditions of which his quest for alms sometimes rendered him witness. Why, thought the recluse, does the Creator load with benefits those who neglect him? Why does He leave his faithful servants in poverty and contempt? Why has not He, who formed the world, made all men equal? Why this partial allotment of happiness and misery?

To clear these doubts, the hermit resolved to quit his cell and visit the world, in search of some one who could remove them. He took his staff and set out on his journey.

Scarce had the solitary left his hermitage when a young man of agreeable aspect appeared before him. He was in the habit of a *sergent*, (a word used to denote any one employed in military or civil service,) but was in fact an angel in disguise. Having saluted each other, the celestial spirit informed the hermit that he had come to visit his friends in that district, and as it was tiresome to travel alone, he was anxious to find a companion to beguile the way. The recluse, whose project accorded wonderfully with the designs of the stranger, offered to accompany him, and they continued their journey together.

Night overtook the travellers before they had extricated themselves from a wood: fortunately, however, they perceived a hermitage, and went to beg an asylum. They were hospitably received by the solitary inhabitant, who gave them what provisions he could afford; but when the hour of prayer was come, the guests observed that their host was solely occupied in scouring a valuable cup from which they had drunk during the repast. The angel noted where the hermit had laid it, rose by night, concealed it, and in the morning, without saying a word, carried it off

with him. His companion was informed on the road of this theft, and wished to return, for the purpose of restoring the goblet. "Stay," said the angel, "I had my reasons for acting thus, and you will learn them soon ; perhaps in my conduct you may again find cause of astonishment, but whatever you may see, know that it proceeds from a proper motive." The hermit was silent, and continued to follow his mysterious companion.

When tired with their journey, and wet with rain which had fallen during the whole day, they entered a populous town ; and as they had no money, they were obliged to demand shelter from gate to gate in the name of God. They were every where refused an asylum, for Dom Argent, whom the English minstrels style Sir Penny, was then (says the tale), as he still is, more beloved than God. Though the rain still continued they were forced to lie down on the outer stair of a house which belonged to a rich usurer, who would scarce have given a halfpenny to obtain Paradise. He at this moment appeared at the window. The travellers implored an asylum, but the miser shut the casement without reply. A servant, more compassionate than her master, at length obtained his permission to let them in, suffered them to lie on a little straw spread under the stair, and brought them a plate of peas, the relics of her master's supper. Here they remained during the night in their wet clothes, without light and without fire. At daybreak the angel, before their departure, went to pay his respects to their landlord, and presented him with the cup which he had stolen from his former host. The miser gladly wished them a good journey. On the way the hermit, of course, expressed his surprise, but was commanded by the angel to be circumspect in his opinions.

The evening of the third day brought them to a monastery, richly endowed. Here they were sumptuously entertained ; but when they were about to depart, the angel set fire to the bed on which he had lain. On ascending a hill at some distance, the hermit perceived the monastery enveloped in flames. When informed that this also was the work of his fellow-traveller, he cursed the hour in which

he had been associated with such a wretch, but was again reprimanded by the angel for his rash conclusions.

On the night of that day the pilgrims lodged with a wealthy burgess. Their host was a respectable old man, who had grown gray with years, but lived happily with a beloved wife and an only son of ten years of age, who was his chief consolation. He entertained the travellers with much kindness, and bade them on the morrow an affectionate adieu.

To reach the high road, however, it was necessary to pass through the town, and to cross a river. Pretending that he was unacquainted with the way, the angel persuaded the old man to allow his son to accompany them to the bridge, and point out to them their path. The father awakened his child, who joyfully came to conduct the travellers. In passing the bridge the angel pushed him into the stream, by which he was instantly overwhelmed. "My work is accomplished," said the angel; "art thou satisfied?" The hermit fled with the utmost precipitation, and, having gained the fields, sat down to deplore the folly of having left his cell, for which God had punished him by delivering him up to a demon, of whose crimes he had become the involuntary accomplice.

While engaged in this lamentation he was rejoined by the heavenly messenger, who thus addressed him:—"In thy cell thou hast arraigned the secret counsels of God: thou hast called in question his wisdom, and hast prepared to consult the world on the impenetrable depth of his designs. In that moment thy ruin was inevitable, had his goodness abandoned thee. But he has sent an angel to enlighten, and I have been commissioned for this ministry. I have in vain attempted to show thee that world which thou hast sought, without knowing it; my lessons are not understood, and must be explained more clearly. Thou hast seen the care of a goblet occupy the mind of a hermit, when he ought to have been fully engaged in the most important of duties: now that he is deprived of his treasure, his soul, delivered from foreign attachments, is devoted to God. I have bestowed the cup on the usurer as the price of the hospitality which he granted, because God

leaves no good action without recompense, and his avarice will one day be punished. The monks of the abbey which I reduced to ashes were originally poor, and led an exemplary life—enriched by the imprudent liberality of the faithful, their manners have been corrupted; in the palace which they erected, they were only occupied with the means of acquiring new wealth, or intrigues to introduce themselves into the lucrative charges of the convent. When they met in the halls, it was chiefly to amuse themselves with tales and trifles. Order, duty, and the offices of the church, were neglected. God, to correct them, has brought them back to their pristine poverty. They will rebuild a less magnificent monastery. A number of poor will subsist by the work, and they, being now obliged to labour the ground for their subsistence, will become more humble and better.”

“I must approve of you in all things,” said the hermit, “but why destroy the child who was serving us? why darken with despair the old age of the respectable father who had loaded us with benefits?” “That old man,” replied the angel, “was formerly occupied with doing good, but as his son approached to maturity he gradually became avaricious, from the foolish desire of leaving him a vast inheritance. The child has died innocent, and has been received among the angels. The father will resume his former conduct, and both will be saved; without that, which thou deemest a crime, both might have perished. Such, since thou requirest to know them, are the secret judgments of God amongst men, but remember that they have once offended thee. Return to thy cell and do penance. I reascend to Heaven.”

Saying thus, the angel threw aside the terrestrial form he had assumed and disappeared. The hermit, prostrating himself on earth, thanked God for the paternal reproof his mercy had vouchsafed to send him. He returned to his hermitage, and lived so holily, that he not only merited the pardon of his error, but the highest recompense promised to a virtuous life.

This tale forms the eightieth chapter of the *Gesta Romanorum*, but there the conflagration of the monastery is omitted, and the strangulation of the infant in the cradle

substituted in its place, while a new victim is conjured up for the submersion. Similar incidents are related in the *Sermones de Tempore* of a German monk of the 15th century. The story also occurs, with some additions and variations, in Howell's *Letters*, which were first published in 1650, but is professed to be transcribed from Sir Philip Herbert's *Conceptions*. There, on first setting out on the journey, the angel tumbles a man into the river because he meant that night to rob his master: he next strangles a child: after which follows the apparently whimsical transference of the goblets. Last of all, the travellers meet with a merchant, who asks his way to the next town, but the angel, by misguiding him, preserves him from being robbed.\* This deviation, I think, occurs in none of the other imitations, and it by no means forms a happy climax. The story has again been copied in the *Dialogues* of the Platonic theologist Dr. Henry More. It has been inserted, as is well known, in the chapter of Voltaire's *Zadig*, *De l'Hermite qu'un Ange conduisit dans le siecle*, and it also forms the subject of the *Hermit of Parnel*. That poem bears a closer resemblance to the tale, as related in the *Gesta Romanorum*, than to any of the other versions. Its author, however, has improved the subject by a more ample developement of the moral lesson, by a happier arrangement of the providential dispensations, and by reserving the discovery of the angel till the conclusion of the whole. But, on the other hand, the purloining the goblet in the *Conte Devot* might have been rationally expected to cure the hermit of his strange habit of scouring it in time of prayer, and the conflagration of the monastery might effectually have corrected the luxury and abuses that had crept into it; but Parnel's transference of the cup must have been altogether inadequate either for the reformation of the vain man, from whom it was taken away, or of the miser, on whom it was bestowed.

The first germ of this popular and widely diffused story may be found, though in a very rude and imperfect shape, in the eighteenth chapter of the *Koran*, entitled the *Cave*.

\* Howell's *Letters*, b. 4, let. 4.



Moses, while leading the children of Israel through the wilderness, found, at the meeting of two seas, the prophet Al Khedr, whom he accosted, "and begged to be instructed by him; and he answered, Verily thou canst not bear with me: for how canst thou patiently suffer those things, the knowledge whereof thou dost not comprehend? Moses replied, Thou shalt find me patient, if God please; neither will I be disobedient unto thee in any thing. He said, If thou follow me, therefore, ask me not concerning any thing, until I shall declare the meaning thereof unto thee. So they both went on by the seashore, until they went up into a ship: and he made a hole therein. And Moses said unto him, Hast thou made a hole therein, that thou mightest drown those who are on board? Now hast thou done a strange thing. He answered, Did I not tell thee that thou couldst not bear with me? Moses said, Rebuke me not, because I did forget; and impose not on me a difficulty in what I am commanded. Wherefore they left the ship, and proceeded, until they met with a youth; and he slew him. Moses said, Hast thou slain an innocent person, without his having killed another? Now hast thou committed an unjust action. He answered, Did I not tell thee that thou couldst not bear with me? Moses said, If I ask thee concerning any thing hereafter, suffer me not to accompany thee: now hast thou received an excuse from me. They went forward, therefore, until they came to the inhabitants of a certain city, and they asked food of the inhabitants thereof; but they refused to receive them. And they found therein a wall, which was ready to fall down; and he set it upright. Whereupon Moses said unto him, If thou wouldst, thou mightst doubtless have received a reward for it. He answered, This shall be a separation between me and thee: but I will first declare unto thee the signification of that which thou couldst not bear with patience. The vessel belonged to certain poor men, who laboured in the sea: and I was minded to render it unserviceable, because there was a king behind them, who took every sound ship by force. As to the youth, his parents were true believers; and we feared lest he, being an unbeliever, should oblige them to suffer his perverseness and ingratitude: wherefore we desired that the Lord might



give them a more righteous child in exchange for him, and one more affectionate towards them. And the wall belonged to two orphan youths of the city, and under it was a treasure hidden which belonged to them; and their father was a righteous man: and thy Lord was pleased that they should attain their full age, and take forth their treasure, through the mercy of thy Lord. And I did not what thou hast seen of mine own will, but by God's direction. This is the interpretation of that which thou couldst not bear with patience." (Sale's Koran, c. 18.)

Several other *Contes Devots*, like the story of the hermit, are of good moral tendency. The great proportion of them, however, are totally the reverse, as they tend to inculcate the doctrine that persons of the most profligate lives may be saved by the repetition of numerous Aves. In almost all, the perfection of morals and Christianity is represented as consisting in the recital of mass, in fasting, and corporeal mortification: sometimes, though rarely, there is added the distribution of alms. A few of the tales, as *La Cour de Paradis*, one would think had been written for the purpose of turning every thing sacred into ridicule. Those relating to the sexual temptations, to which monks were subjected, as *Du Prevot d'Aquilée* and *D'un Hermite et du Duc Malaquin*, are extremely licentious; and it is worthy of remark, that the lives of the nuns and monks are represented as much more profligate in the *Contes Devots* than in the lighter compositions of the *Trouveurs*.

These tales, whatever may be their faults or merits, were transmitted from age to age, and were frequently copied into the ascetic works of the following centuries. From the shade of the monastery, where they had their birth, they passed into the bosom of private families. It was also customary to introduce tales of this nature into the homilies of the succeeding periods. A very long and curious story of this description, concerning a dissolute bishop named Eudo, may be found in one of the *Sermones de Justitia*, of Maillard, a preacher of the fifteenth century. In 1389, a system of divinity appeared at Paris, entitled *Doctrinal de Sapyence*, translated by Caxton under title of *Court of Sapyence*, which abounds with a multitude of

apologues and parables. About the year 1480, there was printed a promptuary or repository of examples for composing sermons, written by a Dominican friar at Basil, who informs us, in a sort of prologue, that St. Dominic, in his discourses, always abounded in embellishments of this description.

Besides, it may be remarked, that the spiritual romance and the tales of chivalry have many features common to both. In the latter, the leading subject is frequently a religious enterprise. The quest of the Sangreal was a main object with the knights of the Round Table, and the exploits of the paladins of Charlemagne chiefly tended to the expulsion of the Saracens and triumph of the Christian faith. The history of Guerino Meschino may be adduced as an instance of an intermediate work between the chivalrous and spiritual romances. It is full of the achievements of knight errantry, the love of princesses, and discomfiture of giants; yet it appears that the author's principal object was the edification of the faithful. This production was of a fame and popularity likely to produce imitation. Spain and Italy have claimed the merit of its original composition, but the pretensions of the latter country seem the best founded, and it is now generally believed to have been written by a Florentine, called Andrea Patria, in the 14th century. Be this as it may, it was first printed in Italian at Padua, 1473, in folio, and afterwards appeared at Venice, 1477, folio; Milan, 1520, 4to.; and Venice, 1559, 12mo. It is the subject of a poem by Tullia Arragona, an Italian poetess of the 16th century. A French translation was printed in 1490. Mad. Oudot has included it in the *Bibliothèque Bleue*, with refinements of style which ill compensate for the *naïveté* of the original.

Guerin was the son of Millon, King of Albania, a monarch descended from the house of Burgundy. The young prince's birth was the epoch of the commencement of his parents' misfortunes. His father and mother were dethroned and imprisoned by an usurper, who would also have slain their heir had not his nurse embarked with him in a vessel for Constantinople. She unfortunately died during the voyage, but the child was taken care of, and

afterwards educated, by a Greek merchant, who happened to be in the vessel, under the name of Meschino, an appellation derived from the unhappy circumstance of his childhood. When he grew up he attracted the notice, and passed into the service, of the son of the Greek emperor, with whom he acted as Grand Carver. At Constantinople he fell in love with the Princess Elizena, his master's sister. There, too, he distinguished himself by his dexterity in tournaments, and also by his exploits in the course of a war, in which the empire was at that time engaged.

In spite of his love, his merit, and services, Guerin had, on one occasion, been called Turk by the Princess Elizena, a term equivalent to slave or villain. To wipe away this reproach he determined on setting out to ascertain who were his parents, as they had hitherto been unknown to him. Concerning this expedition the emperor consulted the court astrologers, who, after due examination of the stars, were unanimously of opinion that Guerin could learn nothing of his parentage, except from the trees of the sun and moon, which grew at the eastern extremity of the world.

After this explication, Guerin prepared for the trip. Having received from the empress a relic composed of the wood of the true cross, which she affirmed would preserve him from every danger and enchantment, he embarked in a Greek vessel and landed in Little Tartary. Thence he took his route through Asia, and, having crossed the Caspian Sea, combated a giant, who seized all travellers he could overtake, especially Christians, and shut them up in his Garde Manger, not only for his own consumption, but to regale the giantess his wife with her four children, who had acquired the family relish for such refreshments. Guerin cut off the whole brood, and thus saved from the spit two prisoners who had been reserved for a *bonne bouche*.

Our hero on his way to India declined the offers made to him by a princess; but the king her father was so much exasperated at this refusal that he threw him into prison, where he would inevitably have died of hunger, had not the lady he had so recently rejected disinterestedly

brought him provisions. This kind procedure had such an effect on the knight, that he broke, in favour of this good princess, an oath of purity he had rashly taken ; but as he only swore fidelity to her by Mahomet, he felt no scruple in abandoning her at the end of three months.

Guerin, in the course of his journey through India, saw great variety of monsters, and heard of dog-headed tribes, and nations with feet so large that they carried them overhead as umbrellas. At length he arrived at the extremity of India, where he found the trees of the sun and moon, who informed him that his name is not Meschino, which he had been hitherto called, but Guerin. He is also told, that he is the son of a king, but that, if he wish farther information, he must take the trouble of visiting the western extremity of the globe.

On his way back, Guerin re-established the Princess of Persepolis in her dominions, of which she had been deprived by the Turks. As a mutual attachment arose between her and Guerin, a marriage would have taken place, had it not been for the recent information given by the solar trees. The indulgent princess allowed her lover ten years to discover his parents, and he promised to return at the end of that period.

Guerin next visited Jerusalem, paid his devotions at the holy sepulchre, and thence passed on a pilgrimage to Mount Sinai. From the Holy Land he penetrated into Ethiopia, and arrived at the states of Prester John. This ecclesiastical emperor was at war with a savage people, who had a giant at their head. Guerin assumed the command of Prester's army, and was eminently successful.

In his subsequent progress through Africa, Guerin converted many infidel kings to Christianity, and in one region he possessed himself of the whole country, except the dominions of King Validor. Against this pagan he prepared to take strenuous measures, but his trouble was much abridged by means of the sister of that monarch. This African princess had become enamoured of Guerin, from the account she had received of his beauty, valour, and strength. She therefore sent a messenger to offer him the head and kingdom of her brother, provided he would consent to espouse her ; or, at least, conduct himself

as her husband. Some of Guerin's retinue received this embassy, and, apprehensive of the over scrupulous conscience of their master, returned in his name a favourable answer. The lady performed her promise in the following manner: she intoxicated her brother, and as he became very enterprising in consequence, she cut off his head in an assumed fit of resentment. The gates of the capital were then opened to Guerin; but, when the princess came to demand from him the recompense of her treachery, she was repulsed with the utmost contempt and indignation, being very ugly, and also red-haired,—a singular defect in an African.

After this Guerin having heard that in the mountains of Calabria there lived a sibyl, who had predicted the birth of our Saviour, he resolved to interrogate her concerning his parents. When he arrived in her neighbourhood, he was informed that he had undertaken a very dangerous expedition, since the sibyl, though twelve hundred years old, still formed designs on the hearts of those who came to consult her, and that it was most perilous to yield to her seductions: but Guerin, who seems to have held in contempt the fascinations of a sibyl twelve hundred years old, was not deterred from his enterprise. In passing the mountains he met with a hermit, who pointed out to him a hollow in a rock, which led to her abode. Having reached the end of this cavern, he came to a broad river, which he crossed on the back of a hideous serpent, who was in waiting, and who informed him during the passage, that he had formerly been a gentleman, and had undergone this unpleasant transformation by the charms of the sibyl. Guerin now entered the palace of the prophetess, who appeared surrounded by beautiful attendants, and was as fresh as if she had been eleven hundred and eighty years younger than she was in reality. A splendid supper was served up, and she informed Guerin in the course of the conversation which arose after the repast, that she enjoyed the benefits of long life and unfading beauty, in consequence of having predicted the birth of our Saviour; nevertheless, she confessed that she was not a Christian, but remained firmly attached to Apollo, whose priestess she had been at Delphos, and to whom she was indebted



for the gift of prophecy; her last abode had been at Cumae, whence she had retired to the palace which she now inhabited.

Hitherto the conversation of the sibyl had not been such as was expected from her endowments. It had been more retrospective than premonitory; and however communicative as to her personal history, she had been extremely reserved on the subject of her guest's. At length, however, she informed him of the names of his parents, and all the circumstances of his birth. She farther promised to acquaint him, on some other occasion, with the place of their residence, and to give him some insight into his future destiny.

At night the sibyl conducted Guerin to the chamber prepared for his repose, and he soon perceived that she was determined to give him considerable disturbance, as she began to ogle him, and then proceeded to the narrowest scrutiny. The wood of the cross, however, which he had received from the Greek empress, and an occasional prayer, procured his present manumission from the sibyl, who was obliged to postpone her designs till the morrow, and thence to defer them for the five following days, owing to the repulsive influence of the same relic.

The prophetess, who seems in her old age to have changed the conduct which procured from Virgil the appellation of Casta Sibylla, still refrained from informing her guest of the residence of his parents, in order that, by detaining him in her palace, she might grasp an opportunity of finally accomplishing her intentions. One Saturday she unluckily could not prevent the knight from being witness to an unfortunate and inevitable metamorphose. Fairies, it seems, and those connected with fairies, are on that day invariably converted into hideous animals, and remain in this guise till the ensuing Monday. Guerin, who had hitherto seen the palace inhabited only by fine ladies and gentlemen, was surprised to find himself in the midst of a *menagerie*, and to behold the sibyl herself contorted into a snake. When she had recovered her charms, Guerin upbraided her with the spiral form into which she had been lately wreathed. He now positively demanded his leave, which having obtained, he forthwith



repaired to Rome, and though he had extricated himself from the den in the most Christian manner, he deemed it necessary to demand the indulgence of the holy father, for having consulted a sibyl who was at once a sorceress, a pagan, and a serpent. The pope imposed on him, as a penance, that he should visit the shrine of St. James in Gallicia, and afterwards the purgatory of St. Patrick in Ireland, at the same time giving him hopes that in the latter place he might hear intelligence of his parents.

Guerin met with nothing remarkable during the first part of his expiatory pilgrimage. The account, however, of Saint Patrick's purgatory is full of wonders. When Saint Patrick went to preach in Ireland, the honest Hibernians refused to believe the articles of his creed, unless they received ocular demonstration of their truth, so that the saint was obliged to set up a purgatory for their satisfaction.\* On arriving in Ireland, Guerin waited on the archbishop, who, after having vainly attempted to dissuade him from this perilous expedition, gave him letters of introduction to the abbot of the Holy Island, which was the vestibule of purgatory. With the connivance of the abbot, Guerin descended into a well, at the bottom of which he found a subterraneous meadow. There he received instructions from two men clothed in white garments, who lived in an edifice built in form of a church. He was thence carried away by two demons, who escorted him from cavern to cavern, to witness the torments of purgatory. Each cavern, he found, was appropriated for the chastisement of a particular vice. Thus, in one, the *gourmands* were tantalized with the appearance and flavour of dressed dishes, and exquisite beverage, which eluded their grasp; while, at the same time, they were troubled with all the colics and indigestions to which their intemperance had subjected them during life. This notion of

\* One of Calderon's plays turns on the establishment of the purgatory of St. Patrick. That saint being shipwrecked in Ireland, conducted the infidel monarch of the country to the mouth of a cavern which led to purgatory. The king threw himself in blaspheming, as was his custom, and by an adroit stratagem of the saint, instead of reaching purgatory, he fell headlong into hell. This immediately effected the conversion of his subjects.

future punishments, appropriate to the darling sins of the guilty, has been common with poets. It occurs in Dante, and we are told in one of Ford's dramas, that

——— There are gluttons fed  
With toads and adders : there is burning oil  
Poured down the drunkard's throat ; the usurer  
Is forced to sup whole draughts of molten gold ;  
There is the murderer for ever stabb'd,  
Yet can he never die.

After Guerin had witnessed the pains of purgatory, he had a display of hell itself, which in this work, is divided into circles, precisely on the plan of Dante's *Inferno*. Indeed, the whole of this part of the romance must have been suggested by the unearthly excursions in the *Divina Commedia*. Judas Iscariot, Nero, and Mahomet, act the most distinguished parts in the tragedy now under the eye of Guerin. Among others, he recognised his old friend the giant Macus, whom he had slain in Tartary, and whose fate is a warning to all who are guilty of an overgrowth, and who regale their wives and children with the flesh of Christian travellers. He also perceived the red-haired African princess, who, for Guerin's sake, had struck off the head of her intoxicated brother. His infernal *Ciceroni* made frequent efforts to add him to the number of the condemned, but were at length reluctantly obliged to give him up to Enoch and Elijah, who pointed out to him Paradise, about as near as Moses saw the Promised Land. These celestial guides, after telling him that he will hear of his parents in Italy, showed him the way back to earth, where he at last arrived, having passed thirty days without sleep or sustenance.

On his return to Rome, Guerin was sent to Albania by the pope, in order to expel the Turks, which, being accomplished, he discovered his father and mother in the dungeon where they had been all along confined. They were speedily re-established on their throne, and the romance concludes with the marriage of Guerin with the Princess of Persepolis, to the great mortification of the Grecian princess Elizena, who now heartily repented having rashly denominated him Turk.

Such is the history of Guerin Meschino, who was certainly the most erratic knight of all those who have traversed the world. No one discomfited a greater number of giants and monsters; no one was more constant to his mistress, than he to the Princess of Persepolis; no one was so devout, as appears from his conduct in purgatory, and the abode of the sibyl, his numerous pilgrimages and successful conversions.

It cannot fail to have been remarked, in tracing the progress of fiction, that, when one species of fabulous writing gave place to another, this happened gradually, and that generally some mixed work was composed, partaking of the mutual qualities of the old and new system. For example, in the romance which we have now been considering, the elements both of the chivalrous and devotional method of writing are blended, but with a greater proportion of the former. In other productions the latter gradually prevailed, till, at length, the traces of the former were almost entirely obliterated: of those works in which spiritual began to gain an ascendancy over romantic fiction, *LES AVENTURES DE LYCIDAS ET DE CLEORITHE*, was the earliest and the finest specimen. It was composed in the year 1529, by the Sieur de Basire, Archdeacon of Sees, though the author pretends that it was originally written in the Syriac language, and translated by him from a Greek version.

When the island of Rhodes was conquered by the Ottoman emperor, the young women were subjected to slavery, and to still severer misfortunes. One of their number, named Cleoritha, was allotted to the favourite minister of the Sultan, and, on account of her beauty, was distinguished by the name of wife, from the crowd of surrounding concubines.

A Christian gentleman, named Lycidas, hearing of her misfortunes, and her inviolable attachment to the faith in which she had been brought up, conceived that a visit from him could not fail to be consolatory. By bribing an eunuch, he was introduced into the seraglio, and Cleoritha soon rewarded his attention, by lavishing on him favours which were with difficulty extorted by her Mussulman husband.

This intercourse subsisted without detection or interruption for six years ; but at the end of that period the mind of Lycidas became a prey to religious melancholy ; he poured forth his feelings of contrition before the penitentiary tribunal, but was shocked at the facility with which he obtained absolution for the crimes he acknowledged. Tormented by his conscience, and disgusted with his confessor, after writing a few lines to Cleoritha, to account for his absence, he departed with the intention of opening his heart to the Bishop of Damascus.

On the approach of the night which concluded his first day's journey, Lycidas arrived at a small and solitary inn, by the side of a wood. Having asked the host for an apartment, he found there was no chamber except one, which, for a long period, had been the nightly rendezvous of demons and sorcerers. Lycidas insisted on that room being assigned to him, in spite of the assurance of the landlord, that for seven years past all the travellers who had slept in it, and, among the rest, a pacha, attended by six janissaries, had been disturbed by supernatural agents.

Scarcely had Lycidas entered the haunted apartment, when six damsels, in array of nymphs, appeared, and proposed to him with apparent civility, that he should accompany them to their mistress. Lycidas at first eyed them with indifference, but at length yielding to the importunities of the fairest, he allowed himself to be conducted to a castle, where he was ushered into a splendid saloon, illumined by a thousand flambeaus. Twenty youths, and as many damsels, of dazzling charms, joined in voluptuous dances, while the most seductive music was poured from the fairest throats. The lady who presided over this festival appeared to be about the age of seventeen, and was of resplendent beauty.

The ball being concluded, the band of dancers and musicians retired, and Lycidas being left alone with the lady, she, mistaking his silence for respect, took an opportunity of encouraging him, by remarking, that the attendants had left her at his mercy. To this observation, and to subsequent overtures still more explicit and enticing, Lycidas maintained the most provoking silence. At length the

lady gave vent to her resentment in reproaches, and then vanished from his view. Soon as she disappeared the lights are extinguished, the fabric falls with a tremendous crash into the abysses of the earth, and Lycidas remains alone in the chaos of a dark and tempestuous night.

By the guidance of a pale and uncertain beam, he regains the solitary abode he had left. There he remains till dawn, when he departs, and arrives, without farther adventures, at the residence of the Bishop of Damascus. Lycidas having explained to him the state of his soul, and his conscientious scruples, this prelate prescribes in the first instance the total renunciation of Cleoritha; he recommends that his penitent should then undertake a journey in the habit of a pilgrim, to all the memorable scenes of the Holy Land; that he should thence repair to Venice, to join the army of that republic in its attempts to reconquer Cyprus, and should conclude with uniting himself to the knights of Jerusalem, in the citadel of Malta.

Lycidas accordingly commences these multifarious ordinances, by despatching a letter to his late mistress, in which he explains his intentions of divorcing himself from her and his vicious passions—urges her to repentance for her manifold transgressions, assures her that he will continue to love her as one loves the apostles, and that he is her obedient servant in God.

Cleoritha feels extremely indignant at this canting epistle, but her passion has yet such influence over her soul, that she escapes from the seraglio to search for Lycidas, in those places where she thinks he is most likely to be found, and pours forth a torrent of abuse on being disappointed in her expectations of overtaking her lover.

Indeed, by this time, Lycidas was on his way to the Holy Land. On his road to Jerusalem he met with the devil and a hermit, who had a trial of strength for the soul of the pilgrim. The devil at first gained some advantage, but the victory remained in the hands of the saint. From Jerusalem Lycidas proceeds to Bethanie, to visit the oratory of the blessed Magdalene. In this place of devotion he feels all the beatitude attached to the progress of a tender repentance; and, remembering the similarity of his own fate to that of the frail, but pardoned sister of Lazarus,



he honours her memory with a few tributary verses, such as,

“O beaulx yeux de la Magdalcine,  
Vous etiez lors un Mont *Æthna*,  
Et vous etes une Fontaine,” &c.

After leaving the Holy Land, Lycidas joins the Christian army in Cyprus, is appointed colonel of a Slavonian regiment, and receives, while combating at its head, a mortal wound. He does not, however, conceive himself exempted from continuing the activity he had exerted in this world, by his translation to the heavenly mansions. Scarcely has he tasted of celestial repose, when he appears one night to Cleoritha, (who by this time had returned to her infidel husband,) and exhorts her on the subject of devotion and her various duties. Unfortunately the spirit of religion inspired by this apparition, induces Cleoritha, with a view again to escape from the mussulman, to listen to the proposals of a Jew who had been long enamoured of her charms. By the advice of one of her female slaves, she receives him on the same footing on which Lycidas had been formerly admitted. The criminal intercourse is detected by the husband; he demands the severest justice of his country, and the same pile consumes the Jew, the slave, and Cleoritha.

About the end of the 16th century, a spiritual romance of some celebrity appeared in the Flemish dialect, written by Boetius Bolswert, an engraver, and brother of Scheldt Bolswert, who was still more famous in the same art. This production recounts the pilgrimage of two sisters, whose names are equivalent to Dove and Wilful, (in the French translation Colombelle and Volontairette,) to Jerusalem, in quest of their Well-beloved. One was, as her name imported, mild and prudent; the other, obstinate and capricious. The contrasted behaviour, and the different issue of the adventures which happen to these two sisters on their journey, form the intrigue of the romance. Thus, they arrive at a village during a fair or festival: Volontairette mingles in a crowd who are following a mountebank; she returns covered with vermin, and her person is



depopulated with much trouble. The other sister escapes by remaining at home, engaged in devotional exercises. This romance is mystical throughout: it is invariably insipid, and occasionally blasphemous.

A number of spiritual romances were written by Camus, Bishop of Bely,\* in the beginning of the 17th century. At the time when this prelate entered the ecclesiastical state, the taste for romance was so strong as to exclude almost every other species of reading. Hence, he is said to have found it necessary to present his flock with fictions, of which the scope was to impress their minds with sentiments of piety. As he had much zeal, and some imagination, and as his readers had but an indifferent taste, these works may have produced, in his own time, the benefit he expected; but he wanted the art and judgment which alone could have rendered them lastingly popular: his numerous and mystical productions fell into disesteem, in the progress of refinement and learning, and a single specimen will satisfy the reader that they are hardly worth being rescued from the oblivion to which they have been consigned.

Achantes, a gentleman of Burgundy, is represented as the model of every Christian virtue. His wife Sophronia, whose character is drawn at full length, is an example of piety and conjugal affection. After the lapse of many years, in the course of which this union was blessed with a number of daughters, Achantes passed to a better life. His relict made a vow of perpetual widowhood, which probably no one had any intention of interrupting, and devoted her time to the education of her daughters, especially of the eldest, called Darie, the heroine of the romance. This young lady was afterwards placed under the care of Theophilus, an enlightened ecclesiastic; and the first fruit of her tuition was the foundation of a monastery. Her education being completed, she was married; but her husband, soon after the nuptials, went abroad and died. The intelligence of his decease was communicated to his spouse by Theophilus, who embraced that opportunity of expatiating on the various topics of religious consolation.

\* See Appendix, No. 1.

Premature labour, however, was the consequence of the disastrous news, and Darie expired, after having been admitted among the number of the religious of that convent which she had formerly founded and endowed.

Of the works of Camus, however, many are rather moral than spiritual romances; that is to say, some moral precept is meant to be inculcated, independent of acts of devotion, the performance of pilgrimages, or foundation of monasteries. All of them are loaded with scriptural quotation, sometimes not very aptly applied, all are of a length fatiguing when compared with the interest of the story, and all are disfigured with affected antithesis, and cumbersome erudition.

We have already had occasion to mention the *Contes Devots*, which were coeval with the *Fabliaux* of the *Trouveurs*. A collection of stories, partly imitated from spiritual tales, particularly the *Pia Hilaria* of Angelin Gazée, and partly extracted from larger works of devotion, with some added by the publisher, appeared in modern French in the middle of the seventeenth century. A few examples may be given, as instances of the extreme of superstitious folly, and as specimens of what for a considerable period formed the amusement of the religious communities of France and the Netherlands.

A countryman one day was driving some lambs to slaughter; fortunately for them, St. Francis happened to be on the road. As soon as the flock perceived him, they raised most lamentable cries. The saint asked the clown what he was going to do with these animals—"Cut their throats," replied he. Good St. Francis could not contain himself at this revolting idea, nor resist the sweet supplications of these innocents; he left his mantle with the barbarous peasant, obtained the lambs in exchange, and conducted them to his convent, where he allowed them to live and thrive at their leisure.

Among this little flock there was a sheep which the saint loved tenderly; he was pleased sometimes to speak to her, and instruct her. "My sister," said he, "give thanks to thy Creator according to thy small means. It is good that you enter sometimes into the temple; but be there more humble than when you go into the fold; walk

only on tiptoe ; bend your knees, give example to little children. But, above all, my dear sister, run not after the rams ; wallow not in the mire, but modestly nibble at the grass in our gardens, and be careful not to spoil the flowers with which we deck our altars."

Such were the precepts of St. Francis to his sheep. This interesting creature reflected on them in private, (*en son particulier*,) and practised them so well, that she was the admiration of every one. If a Religious passed by, the beloved sheep of St. Francis ran before him, and made a profound reverence. When she heard singing in the church, she came straightway to the altar of the Virgin and saluted her by a gentle bleat ; when a bell was sounded, which announced the sacred mysteries, she bent her head in token of respect. "O blessed animal!" exclaims the author, "thou wert not a sheep, but a doctor : thou art a reproach to the worldly ones, who go to church to be admired, and not to worship. I know," continues he, "that the Huguenot will laugh, and say this is a grandmother's tale ; but, say what he will, heresy will be dispelled, faith will prevail, and the sheep of St. Francis be praised for evermore."

On another occasion, St. Francis contracted with a wolf, that the city would provide for him, if he would not raven as heretofore. To this condition he readily assented, and this amiable quadruped farther gratified St. Francis by an assiduous personal attendance. Many saints have taken pleasure in associating with different animals, and St. Anthony, we are somewhere told, made the pig his gossip ; but this brotherhood with wolves seems peculiar to St. Francis.

The Abbé de Corbie had the laudable custom of tenderly rearing a number of crows, in honour of his name. One of these birds was full of tricks and malice. Sometimes he pecked the toes of the novices, sometimes he pinched the tails of the cats, at other times he flew away with the dinner of his comrades, and obliged them to fast like the good fathers ; but his highest delight was to pluck the finest feathers from the peacocks, when they displayed their plumage.

One day the Abbé de Corbie having entered the refec-

tory, took off his ring to wash his hands : our crow darts on it adroitly, and flies off unobserved. When the abbé goes to put on his ring, it is not to be found ; being unable to learn what has become of it, he hurls an excommunication against the unknown author of the theft. Soon the crow becomes plaintive and sad—he does nothing but pine and drag a languishing life—his feathers drop with the slightest breeze—his wings flag—his body becomes dry and emaciated—no more plucking of peacocks' feathers—no more pinching of novices' toes. His condition now inspires compassion in those he had most tormented, and the commiseration even of the peacocks is excited. With a view of ascertaining the cause of his malady, his nest is visited, to see if he has gathered any poisonous plant. What is the astonishment of all, when the ring which the abbé had lost, and now forgotten, is here discovered ! As there is no longer a thief to punish, the anathema is recalled, and the crow resumes in a few days his gaiety and *embonpoint*.

Such were the tales invented and propagated by the monks, partly with pious, and partly with politic designs, which they imposed on the multitude as genuine history, and which were received with eager curiosity and devout credulity.

Some of these stories, absurd as they are, have served as the basis of French and English dramas : *Les Fils Ingrats* of Piron, coincides with one of these spiritual fictions. Another tale which occurs in the *Pia Hilaria*, is that of a drunken beggar, who is carried by the Duke of Burgundy to his palace, where he enjoys for twenty-four hours the pleasures of command. This story is told of Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, in Goulart's *Histoires Admirables*, whence it was translated in one of Grimstone's "*Admirable and Memorable Histories*," which Malone considers the origin of the Induction to the *Taming of the Shrew*. The first notion, however, of such an incident was no doubt derived from the East. In the tale of the *Sleeper Awakened*, in the *Arabian Nights Entertainments*, the Caliph Haroun Alraschid gives a poor man, called Abon Hassan, a soporific powder, and has him conveyed, while under its influence, to the palace, where,

when he awakes, he is obeyed and entertained as the Commander of the Faithful, till, another powder being administered, he is carried back on the following night to his humble dwelling.

Of the various spiritual romances which have appeared in different countries, no one has been so deservedly popular as the *PILGRIM'S PROGRESS* of John Bunyan, an allegorical work, in which the author describes the journey of a Christian from the city of Destruction to the heavenly Jerusalem. The origin of the *Pilgrim's Progress* has been attributed by some to Barnard's Religious Allegory, entitled *The Isle of Man, or Proceedings in Manshire*, published in 1627, while others have traced it to the story of the *Wandering Knight*, translated from French by Wm. Goodyear, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. *Le Pelerinage de l'Ame*, by Ant. Girard, printed at Paris in 1480, and subsequently translated by Caxton, relates, in manner of a dream, the progress of the soul after its departure from the body, till led up to the heavenly mansions. There is also an old French work, which was written by a monk of Calais, and was versified in English as far back as 1426, relating to a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and containing various dialogues between the Pilgrims Grace-Dieu, Sapience, &c. The existence of such works can detract little from the praise of originality; but, if the notion of a journey through the perils and temptations of life, to a place of religious rest, has been borrowed by the author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, it was most probably suggested by a Flemish work already mentioned, which describes the pilgrimage of Colombelle to Jerusalem.

The *Pilgrim's Progress* was written while the author was in prison, where he lay from 1660 to 1672; so that the date of its composition must be fixed between those two periods. This celebrated allegory is introduced in a manner which, in its mysterious solemnity, bears a striking resemblance to the commencement of the *Vision of Dante*: "As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a den, and laid me down in that place to sleep; and as I slept I dreamed a dream—I dreamed, and behold I saw a man clothed with rags, with a book in his hand. I looked and saw him



open the book, and read therein, and as he read he wept and trembled," &c. The author then describes the awakening spiritual fears of his hero, Christian—his resolution to depart from the city of Destruction, suggested perhaps by the flight of Lot from the devoted cities of the plain—his ineffectual attempts to induce his wife and family and neighbours to accompany him—his departure, and all the incidents, whether of a discouraging or comforting nature, which he encountered on his journey.

It was, perhaps, ill-judged in the author to represent Christian as having a wife and family, since, whatever be the spiritual lesson intended to be conveyed by his leaving them, one cannot help being impressed with a certain notion of selfishness and hard-heartedness in the hero. "Now he had not run far from his own house," says the author, "but his wife and children perceiving it, began to cry after him to return; but the man put his fingers into his ears, and ran on, crying, 'Life! life! eternal life!'" So he looked not behind him, but fled towards the middle of the plain." This does not impress us with a very favourable idea of the disposition of the hero, and in fact, with the exception of faith and perseverance, he is a mere negative character, without one good quality to recommend him. There is little or no display of charity, beneficence, or even benevolence, during the whole course of his pilgrimage. The sentiments of Christian are narrow and illiberal, and his struggles and exertions wholly selfish.

The author, however, composed his work agreeably to the notion of Christianity existing in his time, and accordingly this must be kept in view while forming our judgment of its merit. It discovers a rich and happy invention, the incidents and characters are well portrayed, and there is much skill in the dramatic adaptation of dialogue to the characters introduced. But as the author was illiterate, his taste is coarse and inelegant, and he generally injures the beauty of his pictures by some unlucky stroke. The occasional poetry introduced is execrable.

In one point of view, however, this want of learning and taste is favourable to the general effect of the work. It gives to the whole an appearance of simplicity and truth, which is also aided by the author, like Homer, abridging



nothing, but again and again repeating dialogues as they were delivered, and incidents as they occurred. The only art which he possesses, and it has an agreeable effect, is the art of contrast. Thus, for example, the beautiful palace, where he is entertained by the four virgins, Watchful, Prudence, Piety, and Charity, is succeeded by his distressful combat with Apollyon in the Valley of Humiliation, and the confinement in the dungeon of giant Despair is immediately followed by the pleasing picture of the Delectable Mountains.

By the introduction of two other pilgrims in different parts of the journey of Christian, the first of whom, Faithful, dies a martyr, and the second, Hopeful, after the death of the former, accompanies Christian to the end of his pilgrimage, the author not only agreeably diversifies his work, but, by their history and conversation, has an opportunity of expounding his whole system of Faith, and of exhibiting the different means by which the same great object is attained. On the whole, according to the author's views of Christianity, the work is admirably conceived; and the difficulties of his task are a sufficient excuse for those incongruities which, it must be confessed, occasionally occur. For example, one is somewhat surprised at the wickedness of different characters who present themselves to Christian after the journey is almost terminated, and who, according to the leading idea of the work, that Christianity is a pilgrimage, could hardly have been expected to have advanced so far in their progress.

It is difficult to give any specimen of this popular allegory, as its merit consists less in the beauty of detached passages, than in almost irresistibly carrying on the reader to that goal which is the object of pursuit. The following description, however, is short, and gives a favourable idea of the author's power of picturesque delineation:—"In this light, therefore, he came to the end of the valley. Now I saw in my dream, that at the end of this valley lay blood, bones, ashes, and mangled bodies of men, even of pilgrims that had gone this way formerly; and, while I was musing what should be the reason, I espied a little before me a cave, where two giants, Pope and Pagan, dwelt in old time, by whose power and tyranny

the men, whose bones, blood, ashes, &c. lay there, were cruelly put to death. But by this place Christian went without much danger, whereat I somewhat wondered; but I have learned since, that Pagan has been dead many a day, and as for the other, though he be alive, he is, by reason of age, and also of the many shrewd brushes that he met with in his younger days, grown so crazy and stiff in his joints, that he can now do little more than sit in his cave's mouth, grinning at pilgrims as they go by, and biting his nails because he cannot come at them. So I saw that Christian went on his way; yet at the sight of the old man that sat at the mouth of the cave, he could not tell what to think, especially because he spake to him, though he could not go after him, saying, 'You will never mend till more of you be burnt.' But he held his peace, and set a good face on it and went by, and caught no hurt."

Of the powerful painting in the volume, no part is superior to the description of the passage of Christian through the River of Death. The representation also of the arrival of Christian and his fellow-pilgrim at the heavenly Jerusalem is very pleasing, though intermingled with traits which a good taste would have rejected. It concludes in the following manner:—

"Now I saw in my dream that these two men went in at the gate; and, lo! as they entered, they were transfigured, and they had raiment put on that shone like gold.

"There were also that met them with harps and crowns, and gave to them, the harps to praise withal, and the crowns in token of honour. Then I heard in my dream that all the bells in the city rang again for joy, and that it was said unto them, 'Enter ye into the joy of your Lord.' I also heard the men themselves sing with a loud voice, saying, 'Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be to him that sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb, for ever and ever.'

"Now, just as the gates were opened to let in the men, I looked in after them, and behold the city shone like the sun; the streets also were paved with gold, and in them walked many men with crowns upon their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing praises withal.

"There were also of them that had wings, and they answered one another without intermission, saying, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord.' And after that, they shut up the gates; which, when I had seen, I wished myself amongst them."

The emblematic representation of heavenly joys under figure of a magnificent city, so frequent in spiritual romance, probably originated in a scriptural similitude, which was readily adopted by the monks and anchorites of the early ages. It was natural enough for men who were clad in hair-cloth, and who dwelt in solitary caverns or gloomy cells, to imagine that supreme bliss consisted in walking in parade, attired with glittering garments, through streets which shone like gold: but though this occupation may be better than quaffing Hydromel in Valhalla, to us it is scarcely so attractive as the Arabian Paradise, or the *Loca læta et amœna vireta* of a Platonic Elysium.

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## CHAPTER X.

Comic Romance—Works of Rabelais—Vita di Bertoldo—Don Quixote—Gusman d' Alfarache—Marcos de Obregon—Roman Comique, &c.—Political Romance—Utopia—Argenis—Sethos, &c.

ALL men have, more or less, a propensity to satire and ridicule. This tendency has its origin in self-love, which naturally leads us to indulge in a belief of our own superiority over the rest of our species. It is in satire and ridicule that this feeling receives its most frequent gratification; and, spite of the objections of Beattie, nothing can, in many instances, be more just than the reflection of Addison on the well-known theory of Hobbes, that when a man laughs he is not very merry, but very proud.

But, besides the gratification they afford, works of satire and ridicule are useful, as they frequently exhibit mankind in their true light and just proportions, with all their passions and follies. They remove from their con-

duct that varnish with which men so ingeniously cover those actions which are frequently the offspring of pride, private views, or voluntary self-delusion.

In nothing is the superiority of the moderns over the ancients more apparent than in the higher excellence of their ludicrous compositions. Modern ridicule, as has been shown by Dr. Beattie, is at once more copious, and more refined, than the ancient. Many sources of wit and humour, formerly unknown, are now open and obvious, and those which are common to all ages have been purified by improvement in courtesy and taste.

RABELAIS, whom Sir William Temple has styled the Father of Ridicule, is certainly the first modern author who obtained much celebrity by the comic or satirical romance. At the time when he appeared, extravagant tales were in the height of their popularity. As he had determined to ridicule the most distinguished persons, and every thing that the rest of mankind regarded as venerable or important, he clothed his satire somewhat in the form of the lying stories of the age, that under this veil he might be sheltered from the resentment of those whom he intended to deride. By this means he probably conceived that his work would, at the same time, obtain a favourable reception from the vulgar, who, though they should not discover his secret meaning, might be entertained with fantastic stories which bore some resemblance to those to which they were accustomed.

With this view, Rabelais availed himself of the writings of those who had preceded him in satirical romance, and imitated in particular the *True History* of Lucian. His stories he borrowed chiefly from previous facetiae and novellettes: thus the story of Hans Carvel's ring, of which Fontaine believed him the inventor, is one of the Facetiae of Poggio, and entitled *Annulus, or Visio Francisci Philelphi*. With an intention of adding to the diversion of the reader, he has given a mixture of burlesque and barbarous words from the Greek and Latin, a notion which was perhaps suggested by the *Liber Macaronicorum* of Teofilo Folengi, published under name of Merlinus Coccaius, about twenty years before the appearance of the work of Rabelais. An infinite number of puns and

quibbles have also been introduced amongst the more ingenious conceptions of the author. In short, his romance may be considered as a mixture, or olio, of all the merry, satirical, and comic modes of writing that had been employed previous to the age in which he wrote.

There are four things which Rabelais seems principally to have proposed to ridicule in his work: 1. The refined and crooked politics of the period in which he lived. 2. The vices of the clergy, the Romish superstitions, and the religious controversies at that time agitated. 3. The lying and extravagant tales then in vogue. 4. The pedantry and philosophical jargon of the age.

But although it be understood that these in general were the objects of the author, the application of a great part of the satire is unknown. Works of wit and humour, unless they allude to permanent follies, in which case their relish may remain unimpaired, are more subject to the ravages of time, and more liable to become obscure, than any other literary compositions, because the propriety of allusion cannot be estimated when the customs and incidents referred to are forgotten: we must be acquainted with the likeness before we can relish the caricature. "Those modifications of life," says Dr. Johnson, "and peculiarities of practice, which are the progeny of error and perverseness, or at best of some accidental influence, or transient impression, must perish with their parents." To us who are unacquainted with the follies and impieties of the Greek sophists, nothing can appear more wretched than the ridicule with which these pretended philosophers were persecuted by Aristophanes, yet it is said to have acted with wonderful effect among a people distinguished for wit and refinement of taste. The humour, which in *Hudibras* transported the age which gave it birth with merriment, is lost, in a great degree, to a posterity unaccustomed to puritanical moroseness.

No satirical writings have suffered more by lapse of time than those of Rabelais; for, besides being in a great measure confined to temporary and local subjects, he was obliged to write with ambiguity, on account of the delicate matters of which he treated, the arbitrary and persecuting spirit of the age and country in which he lived, and the



multitude of enemies by whom he was surrounded. Accordingly, even to those who are most minutely acquainted with the political transactions and ecclesiastical history of the sixteenth century, there will be many things from which no meaning can be deciphered, and to most readers the works of Rabelais must appear a mass of unintelligible extravagance. The advantages which he formerly derived from temporary opinions, personal allusions, and local customs, have long been lost, and every topic of merriment which the modes of artificial life afforded, now only "obscure the page which they once illumined." Even the outline of the story, with which Rabelais has chosen to surround his satire, has furnished matter of dispute, and commentators are not agreed what persons are intended by the two chief characters, Gargantua and Pantagruel. Thus it has been said by some writers, that Gargantua is Francis I. and Pantagruel Henry II., while, in fact, there is not one circumstance in the lives, nor one feature in the characters, of these French princes, which appears to correspond with the actions or dispositions of the imaginary heroes of Rabelais.

Other critics have supposed that Grangousier, the father of Gargantua, is John D'Albret, King of Navarre; Gargantua, Henry D'Albret, son and successor of John; Pantagruel, Anthony Bourbon, Duke of Vendosme, who was father to Henry IV., and by his marriage with Jean d'Albret, the daughter of Henry D'Albret, succeeded his father-in-law in the throne of Navarre. Picrohole, according to this explication, is King of Spain, either Ferdinand of Arragon, or Charles V. Panurge, the companion of Pantagruel, who is the secondary hero of the work, is said to be John de Montluc, Bishop of Valence, who, like Panurge, was well versed in ancient and modern languages; like him, penetrating and deceitful; like him, professed the popish religion, while he despised its superstitions, and owed, like Panurge, his elevation to the family of Navarre. That want of accordance, which exists in many particulars between the real characters and the delineations of Rabelais, and which is the great cause of the intricacy of the subject, arises from individuals in the work being made to represent two or more persons, whose aggregate



qualities and adventures are thus concentrated in one. On the other hand, the author often subdivides an integral history, so that the same individual is represented under different names. Nor does he confine himself to the order of chronology, but frequently joins together events which followed each other at long intervals.

Holding this in view, it will be found that the commentators who have adopted the above-mentioned key, explain more successfully than could have been expected the meaning and tendency of the five books of Rabelais.

The first is occupied chiefly with the life of Gargantua. An absurd and disgusting carousal of his father Grangousier ridicules the debaucheries of John D'Albret, which often consisted in going privately to eat and drink immoderately at the houses of his meanest subjects. The account of the manner in which Gargantua, or Henry D'Albret, was brought up, corresponds with the mode in which we are informed by historians the young princes of Navarre passed their childhood, especially Henry IV., whom his grandfather inured in his tender age to all sorts of hardship. After some time Gargantua is sent to Paris, and put under the tuition of a pedant called Holofernes, whence Shakspeare has probably taken the name of his pedantic character in *Love's Labour's Lost*. The education of Gargantua is a satire on the tedious and scholastic mode of instruction which was then in use, and is, at the same time, expressive of the little improvement derived by Henry D'Albret from popish tuition, while the progress Gargantua afterwards made in every science under the care of Ponocrates, points out the benefit derived by the prince of Navarre from his protestant teachers, to whose religion he was ardently, though secretly, attached. Gargantua called from Paris to defend his own country, which had been invaded by the Truans, alludes to the wars between the House of D'Albret and the Spaniards—*truand* signifying idle or lazy, which the French imagined to be the character of that people.

Book second commences with a detail of the pedigree of Pantagruel, which the author deduces from the giants, a satire on the family pride of some of the princes of Navarre. Next follow the wonderful feats he performed in

his childhood, and then his youthful expedition to Paris. In this excursion he meets with a Limousin, who addresses him in a pedantic and unintelligible jargon, by which Rabelais mocks the writers of the age, who stuffed their compositions with Latin terms, to which they gave a French inflection. Pantagruel arrives at Paris, and enters on his studies. The catalogue of the books in St. Victor's library, the names of which are partly real and partly fictitious, is meant as a sarcasm on those who form a collection of absurd works. Pantagruel makes such proficiency in his studies, that he is appointed umpire in an important cause, in which the incoherent nonsense of the pleadings of the parties, and Pantagruel's unintelligible decision, are a satire on the judicial proceedings of the age, particularly those that took place in the trial concerning the domains possessed by the Constable of Bourbon, and which were claimed by Louisa of Savoy, mother of Francis I. During his stay at Paris, Pantagruel meets with Panurge, who continues to be a leading character through the remainder of the work, and attends Pantagruel in his expedition against the Dipsodes, who had laid waste a great part of his territory. The Dipsodes are the Flemings, and other subjects of Charles V., who invaded Picardy and the adjacent districts, of which Anthony of Bourbon was governor; and the real issue of that war is enigmatically pointed out towards the end of the second book, by the discomfiture of the three hundred giants.

Panurge is the principal character through the whole of the third book. His mind is represented as fluctuating between the desire of entering into a matrimonial engagement and the fear of repenting his choice. To dispel his doubts he consults certain persons, who, by magical skill, could relieve mental anxiety by prediction of the future: in particular, he applies to Raminogrobis, an aged poet, then in the last moments of his existence, who is intended for Cretin, an author almost as much celebrated in his own day as he has been neglected by posterity. The last person of whom he asks advice puts into his hands an empty bottle, which Panurge interprets to imply that he should undertake a voyage for the purpose of obtaining a response from the oracle of the Holy Bottle.

The fourth and fifth books are occupied with the expedition of Panurge, accompanied by Pantagruel, in quest of the oracle. This voyage is said to signify a departure from the World of Error to search after Truth, which the author places in a bottle, in consequence of the proverbial effects of intoxication. These two books are considered as the most entertaining part of the work, as the satire is more general and obvious than in those by which they are preceded.

In the account of this voyage, the author, according to the expression of Thuanus, *omnes hominum ordines deridendos propinavit*. Each island, which his characters pass, or on which they disembark, is made the vehicle of new ridicule. Thus, the first place touched at is the island of Medamothi (No where), and in the account of the rarities with which this country abounds, the improbable fictions of travellers are ridiculed. In another island the author paints the manners of bailiffs and other inferior officers of justice. Leaving this archipelago of absurdity, the vessel of Panurge and Pantagruel is nearly wrecked in a storm, which typifies the persecution raised in France against the Huguenots, and the land where the ship went into port after the tempest, is the British dominions, which formed a safe harbour from the violence of popish persecution. Here the ruins of obelisks and temples, and vestiges of ancient monuments, denote the abolition of the monasteries which had recently been effected. The last place at which Pantagruel and Panurge arrive is Lanternland, or the Land of Learning, inhabited by professors of various arts and sciences. Our voyagers beseech the queen of this country to grant them a lantern to light and conduct them to the oracle of the Holy Bottle. Their request being complied with, they are guided by the lantern, that is, the light of learning, to the spot which they so vehemently desired to reach. On arriving in the country where the oracle was situated, they, in the first place, pass through an extensive vineyard. At the end of this vineyard, being still preceded by the lantern, they come through a vault, to the porch of a magnificent temple. The architecture of this building is splendidly described, and mysteries have, of course, been discovered by com-

mentators in the account of the component parts. Its gates spontaneously open, after which the perspicuous lantern takes leave, and consigns the strangers to the care of Bacbuc, priestess of the temple. Under her escort they view a beautiful representation of the triumphs of Bacchus, the splendid lamp by which the temple is illuminated, and the miraculous fountain of water, which had the taste of wine. Finally, Panurge is conducted through a golden gate to a round chapel formed of transparent stones, in the middle of which stood a heptagonal fountain of alabaster, containing the oracular bottle, which is described as being of fine crystal, and of an oval shape. The priestess throws something into the fount, on which the water begins to bubble, and the word *Trinc* is heard to proceed from the bottle, which the priestess declares to be the most auspicious response pronounced while she had officiated at the oracle. This term she explains to be equivalent to *Drink*, and as the goddess had directed her votary to the divine liquor, she presents him with Falernian wine in a goblet. The priestess having also partaken with her guests, raves and prophesies, and all being inspired with Bacchanalian enthusiasm, the romance concludes with a *tirade* of obscene and impious verses.

Few writers have been more reviled and extolled than Rabelais; he has been highly applauded by De Thou, but bitterly attacked by the poet Ronsard, and also by Calvin, who thought to have made a convert of him. Subsequent critics are equally at variance: Boileau has called him *La Raison habillée en Masque*, while Voltaire, in his *Temple de Gout* pronounces, that all the sense and wit of Rabelais may be comprised in three pages, and that the rest of the work is a mass of incoherent absurdity.

We are informed by Pasquier, in his *Letters*, (l. 1,) that Rabelais had two unsuccessful imitators.—One under the name of Leon L'Adulfy, in his *Propos Rustiques*, and the other, anonymous, in a work entitled *Les Fanfreluches. Le Moyen de Parvenir*, by Beroalde de Verville, is the work which bears, I think, the closest resemblance to that of Rabelais. The author professes himself an imitator of the father of comic romance, but the disorder that pervades his work is greater than in the romance of his pre-

decessor. Like Athenæus, he introduces a company conversing together at random on various topics, and a number of jests and tales in the manner of Rabelais are thus thrown together at hazard, but there is no leading character or story by which they are in any way connected. We are told in the *Menagiana* that the best of these tales may be found, in form of question and answer, at the end of a MS. in the old language of Picardy, entitled *Les Evangiles des Quenouilles*, and which is different from the printed edition of that production.

In chronological order, the next comic romance, subsequent to the work of Rabelais, is the *VITA DI BERTOLDO*, written in Italian towards the end of the 16th century by Julio Cesare Croce, surnamed Della Lyra, because he dignified with this appellation the violin on which he scraped in the streets of Bologna.

I know of scarcely any celebrated novel or romance which exhibits the rise of the principal character from a low rank to a distinguished fortune by the force of talents. The *Life of Bertoldo*, however, describes the elevation of a peasant to the highest situation in his country, by a species of grotesque humour, and a singular ingenuity in extricating himself from the difficulties into which he is thrown by the malice of his enemies.

This romance is borrowed from the Eastern story of Solomon and Marcolphus, which is one of the many oriental traditions concerning the Jewish monarch. It appeared in a metrical form in the French language in the 13th century; in Latin in the year 1488; and in English under the title of *Sayings and Proverbs of Solomon*, with the answers of Marcolphus. The *Life of Bertoldo*, however, which is the Italian form of this fiction, is the most popular shape it has assumed. Indeed, in the country in which it appeared, it enjoyed, for more than two centuries, reputation equal to that of *Robinson Crusoe*, or the *Pilgrim's Progress*, in this island: the children had it by heart, and the nurses related it to those who had not yet learned to read. Innumerable sayings or proverbs derived from it are still in the mouths of the few who have never perused or forgotten it, as *la pace di Marcolfa*, the wife of



the hero, who habitually quarrelled with her husband for the sake of the reconciliation.

We are told, near the beginning of this work, that in the sixth century King Alboino reigned over Lombardy in his capital of Verona. At the same time there lived, in a small village in the neighbourhood, a peasant called Bertoldo, of a strange and ludicrous aspect. His large head was round as a foot-ball, and garnished with short red hair; he had two little blear eyes, fringed with scarlet; a flat broad nose; a mouth from ear to ear, and a person corresponding to the charms of his countenance.

But the deformity of Bertoldo's appearance was compensated by the acuteness and solidity of his understanding. His neighbours preferred his moral instructions to those of their pastor; he adjusted their differences more to their satisfaction, than the lord of the territory or the judge, and he made them laugh more heartily than the mountebanks, who occasionally passed through the village.

One day Bertoldo took a longing to see the court and capital. On entering Verona, he observed two women disputing on the street, about the property of a mirror, and followed them to the hall of audience, whither they were summoned to receive the judgment of the king, who had overheard their quarrel. The singularity of Bertoldo's figure, and his presumption in choosing a seat reserved for the chief courtiers, attracted the monarch's attention, whose curiosity was farther excited by the singular answers he returned to the first questions concerning his situation in life, his age, and residence. His majesty, in consequence, persisted in a series of interrogatories; he asked which is the best wine? "That which we drink at the expense of another." "Who caresses us most?" "He who has already deceived us, or intends to do so,"—an idea that has been expressed by Ariosto:

Chi mi fa piu carezze che non suole,  
O m' ingannato o ingannar mi vuole.

Bertoldo now listened to the pleadings in the cause concerning the mirror. The king ordered it to be broken in two, and divided between the disputants. She of the parties who opposed this arrangement, and prayed that it



might be given entire to her adversary, had the whole bestowed on her. The courtiers applauded this happy application of the judgment of Solomon ; but Bertoldo pointed out those specialties of the case, from which he conceived that that decision ought not be held as a precedent, and concluded with some satirical reflections on the fair sex, to which the king replied in a studied eulogy. These sarcasms, and a device by no means ingenious, to which he had recourse, in order to convince the king that his majesty entertained too favourable an opinion, induced the queen to avenge the injury offered to those of her sex. On pretence of rewarding Bertoldo, she sent for him to her apartments. "What a ridiculous figure you are," remarked her majesty: "Such as it is," replied Bertoldo, "I have it from nature—I neither mend my shape nor counterfeit a complexion." Perceiving that the queen, and the ladies who attended her, were provided with switches, and thence suspecting their hostile intentions, he informed them, that, being somewhat of a sorcerer, he was not only aware of their designs, but foresaw that she would give the first blow, who had least regard to her own and her husband's honour. Bertoldo escaped unhurt by this device, which is similar to that in the 39th of the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, (see above, vol i. p. 416.)

The drollery of Bertoldo excited the jealousy of Fagotti, who had been long the unrivalled buffoon of the court. The author relates a number of absurd questions, which Fagotti put with the view of exposing his enemy, and the triumphant answers of our hero.—"How would you carry water in a sieve?" "I would wait till it was frozen." "When could you catch a hare without running?" "When it is on the spit." These, and many other repartees of Bertoldo, correspond with stories told of Bahalul, surnamed Al Megnun, the court-fool of Haroun Alraschid. (D'Herbelot, *Bib. Orient. Bahalul.*)

About this time Bertoldo's old foes, the court-ladies, insisted on admission into the councils of state. His majesty was somewhat embarrassed by the application, till, by advice of Bertoldo, he appeared to acquiesce in the demand, and sent a box to the wife of the prime minister, desiring her to keep it in the garden till next day, when the ladies

and ministers were to deliberate on its contents. The minister's wife opened it from curiosity, and the bird which was inclosed flew off. She thus demonstrated how ill qualified the fair sex were to be intrusted with secrets of state.

The ladies resolved to be avenged on Bertoldo, for the disappointment they had sustained by his means. He was a second time summoned to the queen's apartments, but, before proceeding thither, he put two live hares in his pocket. On his way it was necessary to cross a court, which was guarded by two monstrous dogs, purposely unchained. Bertoldo occupied their attention by setting loose the two hares, and, while the dogs were engaged in the chase, he arrived safe in the apartments of the queen, to the utter mortification of her majesty and her attendants.

Perceiving that Bertoldo eluded all stratagem, the queen insisted that he should be hanged without farther ceremony, to which the king readily consented. Our hero acceded to this proposal with less reluctance than could have been expected, but stipulated that he should be allowed to choose the tree on which he was to expiate his offences. He was accordingly sent forth, escorted by the officers of justice and the executioner, in order to make his election, but cavilled at every tree which was recommended to his notice—an incident which occurs in the original Solomon and Marcolphus. During this search Bertoldo made himself so agreeable to the guards, by his pleasant stories, that they allowed him to escape, and he returned to his native village.

Her majesty afterwards repented of her cruelty, and, on being informed that Bertoldo was still alive, she requested that he might be recalled to court. With a good deal of difficulty he was persuaded to return, and was made a privy counsellor. Owing, however, to the change in his mode of life, he did not long survive his elevation.

I have given this abstract of the Life of Bertoldo, not on account of its merit, but celebrity; and, because it formed for two hundred years the chief literary amusement of one of the most interesting countries in Europe. It is unnecessary, however, to enlarge on the life of the

son Bertoldino, written by the author of Bertoldo, but added a long while after his first composition, or on that of the grandson Cacasenno, by Camillo Scaliger della Fratta. These works never attained the same popularity as their original, and are inferior to it in point of merit. The same king who had patronized Bertoldo, believing that talents were hereditary, brought the son to court, where he became as noted for folly and absurdity, as his father had been for shrewdness, and was speedily sent back in disgrace to his village. His majesty, not satisfied with one experiment, sent for the grandson, who proved a glutton and poltroon, and the incidents of the history hinge on the exhibition of his bad qualities.

The lives of these three peasants form the subject of a much-esteemed Italian poem, which was written in the end of the 17th, or commencement of the 18th century, under the following circumstances. Joseph Maria Crespi, a celebrated artist of Bologna, executed a series of paintings, illustrative of the adventures of Bertoldo and his descendants, in which the figures of the principal characters were delineated with infinite spirit. From his pictures a set of engravings was taken by a Bolognese artist, and, instead of publishing a new edition of the prose romance, in which these might have been introduced, several wits of Italy conceived the notion of making Bertoldo and his family the heroes of a poem, in what the Italians call the *Genere Bernesche*, from Berni its inventor, which is somewhat of a higher tone than the French burlesque, but lower than our satire. This composition was divided into twenty cantos: Each member of the association wrote a canto, except three of the number; one of whom gave arguments in verse, another furnished an allegory, and the last appended learned annotations. The work was printed at Bologna in 1736, with all the decorations which accompany the finest Italian poems, and had soon a wonderful success. It was translated into the Bolognese and Venetian dialects, and a vocabulary of each of these jargons was appended to the editions 1746 and 1747. It has also been versified in modern Greek.

By far the most celebrated romance of the class with which we are at present engaged, is the *Life and Exploits*

of DON QUIXOTE, which first appeared in the beginning of the 17th century, a few years posterior to the composition of the Life of Bertoldo.

At a time when the spirit of practical knight-errantry was extinguished, but the rage for the perusal of relations of chivalrous extravagance continued unabated, Cervantes undertook to ridicule the vitiated taste of his countrymen, and particularly, it is said, of the Duke of Lerma, whose head was intoxicated with the fictions of romance. His work accordingly is not intended, as some have imagined, to expose the quest of adventures, the eagerness for which had ceased not only at the time in which Cervantes wrote, but in which Don Quixote is feigned to have existed. Indeed, if this had not been supposed, the merit of the work would be diminished, as a considerable portion of the ridicule arises from the singularity of the hero's undertaking. Don Quixote, therefore, was written with the intention of deriding the folly of those, whose time, to the neglect of other studies and employments, was engrossed with the fabrication or perusal of romantic compositions. The author indeed informs us in his prologue, that his object was, "deribar la maquina mal fundada de los libros caballerescos, y deshacer la autoridad y cabida que tenian en el mundo y en el vulgo."

With this view the Spanish author, as all the world knows, has represented a man of amiable disposition, and otherwise of sound understanding, whose brain had become disordered by the constant and indiscriminate perusal of romances of chivalry; a fiction by no means improbable, as this is said to be frequently the fate of his countrymen towards the close of their days:—"Sur la fin de ses jours Mendoza devint furieux, comme font d'ordinaire les Espagnols," (*Thuana*, &c.)

The imagination of Don Quixote was at length so bewildered with notions of enchantments and single combats, that he received as truth the whole system of chimeras of which he read, and fancied himself called on to roam through the world in quest of adventures with his horse and arms, both for the general good, and the advancement of his own reputation. In the course of his errantry, which is laid in La Mancha and Arragon, the most fami-

liar objects and occurrences appear to his distempered imagination clothed in the veil of magic and chivalry, and formed with those romantic proportions to which he was accustomed in his favourite compositions : and if at any time what he had thus transformed, flash on his understanding in its true and natural colours, he imagines this real appearance all delusion, and a change accomplished by malevolent enchanters, who were envious of his fame, and wished to deprive him of the glory of his adventures.

These two principles of belief form the basis of the work, and, by their influence, the hero is conducted through a long series of comical and fantastic incidents, without entertaining the remotest suspicion of the wisdom or propriety of his undertaking. In all his adventures he is accompanied by a squire, in whom the mixture of credulity and acuteness forms, in the opinion of many, the most amusing part of the composition : indeed, if laughter, as has been said by some persons, arise from the view of things incongruous united in the same assemblage, nothing can be more happy than the striking and multifarious contrasts exhibited between Sancho and his master. The presence of the squire being essential to the work, his attendance on the knight is secured by the promise of the government of an island, and the good luck of actually finding some pieces of gold on the Sierra Morena. At length, one of Don Quixote's friends, with the intention of forcing him to return to his own village, assumes the disguise of a knight, attacks and overthrows him ; and, according to the conditions of the rencounter, insists on his retiring to his home, and abstaining for a twelvemonth from any chivalrous exploit. The period Don Quixote resolves to pass as a shepherd, and lays down an absurd plan of rural existence, which, though written by the author of *Galatea*, is certainly meant as a satire on pastoral compositions, which, in the time of Cervantes, began to divide the palm of popularity with romances of chivalry.

In the work of Cervantes there is great novelty of plan, and a species of gratification is presented to the reader, which is not afforded in any previous composition. We feel infinite pleasure in first beholding the objects as they are in reality, and afterwards as they are metamorphosed



by the imagination of the hero. From the nature of the plan, however, the author was somewhat circumscribed in the number of his principal characters; but, as Milton has contrived to double his *dramatis personæ*, by representing our first parents in a state of perfect innocence, and afterwards of sin and disgrace, Cervantes has in like manner assigned a double character to Don Quixote, who is a man of good sense and information, but irrational on subjects of chivalry. Sancho, too, imbibes a different disposition, when under the influence of his master's frenzy, from that given him by nature. The other characters who intervene in the action are represented under two appearances,—that which they possess in reality, and that which they assume in Don Quixote's imagination.

The great excellence, however, of the work of Cervantes, lies in the readiness with which the hero conceives, and the gravity with which he maintains, the most absurd and fantastic ideas, but which always bear some analogy to the adventures in romances of chivalry. In order to place particular incidents of these fables in a ludicrous point of view, they were most carefully perused and studied by Cervantes. The Spanish romances, however, seem chiefly to have engaged his attention, and Amadis de Gaul appears to have been used as his text. Indeed, there are so many allusions to romances of chivalry, and so much of the amusement arises from the happy imitation of these works, and the ridiculous point of view in which the incidents that compose them are placed, that I cannot help attributing some affectation to those, who, unacquainted with this species of writing, pretend to possess a lively relish for the adventures of Don Quixote. It is not to be doubted, however, that a considerable portion of the pleasure which we feel in the perusal of Don Quixote, is derived from the delineation of the scenery with which it abounds—the magnificent sierras—romantic streams and delightful valleys of a land which seems as it were the peculiar region of romance, from Cordoba to Roncesvalles. There is also in the work a happy mixture of the stories and names of the Moors, a people who, in a wonderful degree, impress the imagination and affect the heart, in consequence of their grandeur, gallantry, and misfor-



tunes; and partly, perhaps, from the many plaintive ballads in which their achievements and fate are recorded.

Of the work of Cervantes, the first part is, I think, incontestibly the best. In the second we feel hurt and angry at the cruelty of the deceptions practised by the duke and duchess on Don Quixote; and surely, the chimerical conceptions which spontaneously arise in his mind from the view of natural objects, are more entertaining than those which are forced on it by artificial combination, and the instrumentality of others.

The first part of Don Quixote was given to the world in 1605, and the second in 1615. In the interval between these two periods, in the year 1614, and while Cervantes was preparing for the press, an author who assumed the name of Avelleneda published at Tarragona his continuation of the first part of Don Quixote. This is the work which is so frequently mentioned and reviled in the second part by Cervantes, especially in the preface; yet so little is this production known, that many have supposed that Cervantes only combated a phantom of his own imagination. Some personal quarrel had probably existed between these authors, as the preface of Avelleneda contains not only much unfair criticism on the writings of his enemy, but a vast deal of personal abuse: he reminds him that he is now as old as the castle of San Cervantes, and so churlish that no friend will furnish his works with commendatory sonnets, which he is in consequence obliged to borrow from Prester John. The only apology, he continues, for the absurdities of the first part of Don Quixote is, that it was written in prison, and must necessarily have been infected with the filth of such a residence. Cervantes probably felt that his old age, poverty, and imprisonment, were not very suitable subjects of ridicule to his countrymen: and the provocation he had received certainly justified his censure of Avelleneda in the second part of Don Quixote.

The work of Avelleneda, which is thus loaded with personal abuse, is also full of the most unblushing plagiarisms from Cervantes, from whom he principally differs by his incidents chiefly glancing at Don Belianis, instead of Amadis de Gaul. In the continuation by Avelleneda,

Don Quixote's brain being anew heated by the perusal of romances, he condemns himself for his inactive life, and for omitting the duties incumbent on him, in the deliverance of the earth from those haughty giants, who, against all right and reason, insult both knights and ladies. Discovering that Dulcinea is too reserved a princess, he resolves to be called the Loveless Knight (*Caballero Desamorado*), and to obliterate her recollection, which he justifies by the example of the Knight of the Sun, who in similar circumstances forsook Claridiana. At the commencement of his career, he mistakes an inn for a castle, the vintner for the constable, and a Galician wench, who corresponds to Maritornes, for a distressed Infanta; on entering Saragossa he delivers a criminal from the lash of the alguazils, whom he believes to be infamous and outrageous knights,—an incident evidently borrowed from the *Galley Slaves* of Cervantes.

On the other hand, either Avelleneda must have privately had access to the materials of the second part of Cervantes, or he has been imitated in turn. Thus, in the work of Avelleneda, we have the whole scheme of Sancho's government; and Don Alvaro de Tarfo, who encourages Don Quixote in his folly, by presenting him with persons dressed up as knights and giants, who come to defy him from all quarters of the globe, corresponds to the duke in the second part of Cervantes.

The two works are on the whole pretty much in the same tone; but we are told in the prefaces to the Spanish editions and French translations of Avelleneda, that in the Peninsula he is generally thought to have surpassed Cervantes in the delineation of the character of Sancho, which, as drawn by Cervantes, is supposed to be a little inconsistent, since he sometimes talks like a guileless peasant, and at other times as an arch and malicious knave. The Don Quixote, too, of Avelleneda never displays the good sense which the hero of Cervantes occasionally exhibits, and in his madness is more absurd and fantastical, especially when he indulges in visions of what is about to happen:—"I will then draw near the giant, and without ceremony say, Proud giant, I will fight you on condition the conqueror cut off the vanquished enemy's head. All

giants being naturally haughty, he will accept the condition, and he will come down from his chariot, and mount a white elephant led by a little dwarf, his squire, who, riding a black elephant, carries his lance and buckler. Then we shall commence our career, and he will strike my armour, but not pierce it, because it is enchanted; he will then utter a thousand blasphemies against heaven, as is the custom of giants," &c. &c. Of this work of Avelleda, there is a French paraphractical translation, attributed to Le Sage, from which Baker's English translation was formed. In Le Sage's version there are many interpolations, one of which is a story introduced in Pope's *Essay on Criticism* :

"Once on a time La Mancha's knight, they say,  
A certain bard encountering on the way," &c.

The catastrophe is also totally changed. In the French work Don Quixote is shot in a scuffle, whereas in the Spanish original he is shut up in a mad-house at Toledo by Don Alvaro de Tarfo, who had contributed so much to the increase of his frenzy.

Le Sage is also the reputed author of a sequel of the genuine Don Quixote, in which there are introduced a number of Spanish stories, and the adventures of Sancho after his master's death.

A work of the popularity of Don Quixote could not fail to produce numerous imitations. Of these, by far the most distinguished is *Hudibras*, the hero of which is a presbyterian justice, who, accompanied by a clerk of the sect of Independants, ranges the country in the rage of zealous ignorance, with the view of correcting abuses and repressing superstition. But much closer imitations have appeared in a more recent period. In *Pharsamon ou les Nouvelles folies Romanesques*, the earliest work of the celebrated Marivaux, and the *Sir Launcelot Greaves* of Smollet, the heroes are struck with the same species of frenzy with Don Quixote, which makes the resemblance too striking. In other imitations, a different species of madness is represented. Thus, in the *Female Quixote*, by Mrs. Lennox, published in 1752, which is a satire on the romances of the school of Gomberville and Scuderi,

the heroine is a lady of rank and amiable qualities, but, being brought up by her father in perfect seclusion, and accustomed to the constant perusal of such works as *Clelia* and *Artamenes*, she at length believes in the reality of their incidents, and squares her conduct to their fantastical representations. She fancies that every man is secretly in love with her, and lives in continual apprehension of being forcibly carried off. Her father's gardener she supposes to be a person of sublime quality in disguise; she also asks a waiting-maid to relate her lady's adventures, which happened to be of a nature not fit to be talked of, and discards a sensible lover, because she finds him deficient in the code of gallantry prescribed in her favourite compositions.

In the *Berger Extravagant* of Sorel, pastoral romance is ridiculed on a similar system; but perhaps the most agreeable imitation of *Don Quixote*, is the *History of Sylvio de Rosalva*, by the German poet Wieland. In the beginning of last century, the taste for fairy tales had become as prevalent, particularly in France, as that for romances of chivalry had been in Spain a century before. This passion Wieland undertook to ridicule: *Sylvio de Rosalva*, the hero of his romance, is a young gentleman of the province of Andalusia, who, having read nothing but tales of fairies, believed at last in the existence of these chimerical beings. Accidentally finding in a wood the miniature of a beautiful woman, he supposes it to be the representation of a spell-bound princess, predestined to his arms by the fairy *Radiante* under whose protection he conceives himself placed. Most of the adventures occur in the search of this visionary mistress, whom he imagines to have been transformed into a blue butterfly, by a malevolent fairy, because she had declined an alliance with her nephew, the *Green Dwarf*. He is at length received at the castle of *Lirias*, of which the possessor had a sister residing with him. Here he discovers that the miniature had been dropped by that lady, and that it had been done for her grandmother when at the age of sixteen. He is cured of his whims by this circumstance, and by the arguments of his friends, especially of the young lady, of whom he becomes deeply enamoured, and whose beauty

the disenchanted enthusiast at length prefers to the imaginary charms which he had so long pursued. The leading incident of the picture is taken from the story of Seyfel Molouk, in the Persian Tales, where a prince of Egypt falls in love with a portrait, which, after spending his youth in search of the original, he discovers to be a miniature of a daughter of the King of Chabbal, a princess who was a contemporary with Solomon, and had herself been the mistress of that great prophet. (See also Bahar-Danush, c. 35.) In other respects the work of Wieland is a complete imitation of Don Quixote. Pedrillo, the attendant of Sylvio, is a character much resembling Sancho: he has the same love of proverbs, and the same sententious loquacity. Nothing can be worse judged, than so close an imitation of a work of acknowledged merit; at every step we are reminded of the prototype, and where actual beauties might be otherwise remarked, we only remember the excellence of the original, and the inferiority of the imitation. Sometimes, however, the German author has almost rivalled that solemn absurdity of argument, which constitutes the chief entertainment in the dialogues of the knight of La Mancha with his squire. "Pedrillo," said Don Sylvio, "I am greatly deceived, or we are now in the palace of the White Cat, who is a great princess, and a fairy at the same time. Now, if the sylphid with whom thou art acquainted belong to this palace, very probably the fairy thou sawest yesterday is the White Cat herself."

The story of Prince Biribinquer, however, is a part of the plan peculiar to Wieland. It is an episodic narrative, compiled from the most extravagant adventures of well known fairy tales, and is related to Don Sylvio by one of his friends, for the purpose of restoring him to common sense, by too outrageous a demand on his credulity.

The resemblance between the incidents in Sylvio de Rosalva and the adventures of Don Quixote, has led me away from the chronological arrangement of the comic romances, to which I now return.

About the period of the publication of Don Quixote, the Spaniards, whose works of fiction fifty years before were



entirely occupied with Soldans of Babylon and Emperors of Trebizond, entertained themselves chiefly with the adventures of their swindlers and beggars. All works of the 16th century, which treat of the Spanish character and manners, particularly the Letters of Clenardus,\* represent, in the strongest colours, the indolence of the lower classes, which led them to prefer mendicity and pilfering to the exercise of any trade or profession; and the ridiculous pride of those hidalgos, who, while in want of provisions and every necessary of life at home, strutted with immense whiskers, long rapiers, and ruffles without a shirt, through the streets of Madrid or Toledo. The miserable inns, the rapacity of officers of justice, and ignorance of medical practitioners, also afforded ample scope for the satire contained in the romances of this period, most of which are perhaps a little overcharged, but, like every other class of fiction, only present a highly coloured picture of the manners of the age.

The work which first led the way to those compositions, which were written in the *Gusto Picaresco*, as it has been called, was the *Lazaro de Tormes*, attributed to Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, who, as governor of Sienna and ambassador to the Pope from Spain, became the head of the imperial party in Italy during the reign of Charles V. Stern, tyrannical, and unrelenting, he was the counterpart of the Duke of Alva in his political character; but as an amatory poet, he was the most tender and elegant versifier of his country, and every line of his sonnets breathes a sigh for repose and domestic felicity. After his recall from Sienna he retired to Granada, where he wrote a history of the revolt of the Moors in that province, which, next to the work of Mariana, is the most valuable which has appeared in Spain: he also employed himself in collecting vast treasures of oriental MSS. which at his death he bequeathed to the king, and which still form the most precious part of the library of the Escorial.

\* Nic. Clenardi. *Epist. lib. duo*. These are letters addressed to his friends in Holland and Germany by a Dutch scholar, who visited Spain in the middle of the 16th century for the purpose of making researches in Arabian literature.



Lazaro de Tormes was written by him in his youth, while studying at Salamanca, and was first printed in 1553. The hero of this work was the son of a miller, who dwelt on the banks of the Tormes. When eight years of age, he is presented by his mother as a guide to a blind beggar, whom he soon contrives to defraud of the money and provisions which were given to him by the charitable. After this he enters into the service of an ecclesiastic, who kept his victuals locked up in a chest, and a long chapter is occupied with the various stratagems to which Lazaro resorted in order to extract from it a few crusts of bread. When in the last extremity of hunger, he leaves the ecclesiastic to serve a hidalgo of Old Castile. This new master is in such want of the necessaries of life, that Lazaro is compelled to beg for him at convents and the gates of churches, while the hidalgo hears mass, or stalks along the chief promenades with all the dignity of a Duke D'Infantado.

This work seems to have been left incomplete by its original author, but a second part has been added by H. de Luna, who in his preface says, that his chief inducement to write was the appearance of an absurd continuation, in which Lazaro was said to have been changed to a fish. In De Luna's continuation, Lazaro, having embarked for Algiers, is picked up at sea by certain fishermen, and exhibited as a sea monster through the different towns of Spain, till having at length escaped, he arrives, after experiencing some adventures, at a hermitage. The recluse by whom it was inhabited dying soon after, he equips himself in the garb of the deceased, and subsists by the contributions of the charitable in the neighbourhood,—an incident which resembles part of the history of Don Raphael in *Gil Blas*.

Of those Spanish romances which were composed in imitation of *Lazaro de Tormes*, the most celebrated is the *Life of GUSMAN ALFARACHE*, which was written by Matthew Aleman, and was first printed in 1599, at Madrid. This impression was followed by twenty-five Spanish editions, and two French translations, one of which is by Le Sage.

Gusman Alfarache was the son of a Genoese merchant,

who had settled in Spain. After the death of his father, the affairs of the family having fallen into disorder, young Gusman eloped from his mother, and commenced the career in which he met with those comical adventures, which form the subject of the romance. At a short distance from Seville, the place whence he set out, he falls in with a muleteer, with whom he lodges at different inns, the description of which gives us a very unfavourable impression of the *posadas* of Andalusia.

On his arrival at Madrid, Gusman fits himself out as a mendicant; he fixes on a station at the corner of a street, and the persons of all ranks who pass before him, officers, judges, ecclesiastics, and courtesans, give the author an opportunity of moralizing and commenting on the manners of his countrymen, during the reign of the Austrian Philips. Our hero speedily grafts the practices of a sharper on his present vocation, and is in consequence forced to fly to Toledo, where he assumes the character of a man of fashion, and engages in various intrigues. As long as his money lasts, Gusman is well received, but when it is expended he obtains some insight into the nature of the friendship of sharpers, and the love of courtesans. He accordingly sets out for Barcelona, whence he embarks for Genoa in order to present himself to his father's relations, by whom he is very harshly treated. From Genoa he is forced to beg his way to Rome, which, it seems, is the paradise of mendicants. There he attains great perfection in his art, by studying the rules of a society into which he is admitted. Among other devices, he so happily counterfeits an ulcer, that a Roman cardinal takes him home, and has him cured. He then becomes the page of his eminence, and rises into high favour, which continues till, being detected in various thefts, he is driven from the house with disgrace. Gusman seeks refuge with the French ambassador, who, being easily convinced of his innocence, takes him into his service. His master employs him to propitiate a Roman lady, of whom he was enamoured, but Gusman manages matters so unfortunately, that the intrigue becomes public. In despair at his bad success, Gusman asks leave to return to Spain. In his progress through Tuscany he meets with a person

of the name of Saavedra, a man of similar dispositions with himself, by whom he is at first duped, but who afterwards assists him in duping others, while they pass through the different towns in the north of Italy. On his return to the capital of his native country, Gusman marries a woman with whom he expected to obtain a large fortune. This alliance proves very unfortunate; his affairs go into disorder, and after his wife's death he enters as a student at Alcala, in order to obtain a benefice.

While at this university, our hero becomes acquainted with three sisters who were great musicians, but of suspected virtue; he marries the eldest, renounces the ecclesiastical profession, and arrives with his wife at Madrid. For some time the *menage* goes on prosperously, in consequence of her beauty and accommodating disposition, but having quarrelled with an admirer of some political importance, she and her husband are banished from Madrid, and retire to Seville, where the lady soon decamps with the captain of a Neapolitan vessel. By the interest of a Dominican confessor, Gusman is introduced into the house of an old lady, as her chamberlain, but manages the affairs entrusted to him with such villany, that he is arrested and sent to the galleys. His fellow-slaves attempt to engage him in a plot to deliver the vessels into the power of the corsairs. He reveals the conspiracy, and, having obtained his freedom for this service, employs himself afterwards in writing his history.

In this romance several interesting episodes are introduced. Of these, the best are the story of Osmin and Daraxa, recounted to Gusman by a fellow-traveller on the way from Seville to Madrid, and the tale which he hears related in the house of the French ambassador at Rome. The first is in the Spanish style, and describes the warm, refined, and generous gallantry, for which Granada was celebrated at the close of the 15th century. The second is in the Italian taste, and paints the dark mysterious intrigue, the black revenge, and atrocious jealousy, of which we have seen so many examples in the works of the novelists of that country, and which were not inconsistent with the disposition of the inhabitants. Another episode, the story of Lewis de Castro, and Roderigo de Montalvo, coin-

cides with the 41st tale of Massuccio, with *La Precaution Inutile* of Scarron, and the underplot concerning Dinant, Cleremont, and Lamira, in Beaumont and Fletcher's comedy of the *Little French Lawyer*, (see above, vol ii. p. 92, &c.)

The frequent introduction of these episodes, is one of the circumstances in which this romance bears a resemblance to *Gil Blas*, a work of which *Gusman Alfarache* has been regarded as the model. *Gusman*, indeed, is a much greater knave than *Gil Blas*, and never attains his dignity—the pictures of manners have little resemblance, and in the Spanish work there are tiresome moral reflections on every incident, while the French author leaves the reader to draw his own conclusions from the situations in which the characters are placed. Still, however, both heroes begin by being dupes, and afterwards become knaves. The same pleasantry on the officers of justice runs through both, and the story of *Scipio*, like that of *Saavedra*, is too much chalked out after the adventures of his master.

Whether this romance has suggested any notions to the author of *Gil Blas* or not, it was at least the origin of a swarm of Spanish works concerning the adventures of beggars, gipsies, and the lowest wretches. The *Picara Justina*, which bears the name of the licentiate Lopez de Ubeda as its author, but is generally attributed to Fra Anton Perez, seems to have been written to correspond with *Gusman d'Alfarache*. This romance, which was printed in 1605, commences, like *Jonathan Wild*, with an account of the ancestors of the heroine *Justina*, the daughter of an innkeeper, by whom she was early initiated into the art of imposing on passengers, and after his death continued, in various capacities, to dupe the inhabitants of Leon and the Castiles. The work is also interspersed with many moral and satirical reflections.

The *Life of Paul the Sharper*, by Quevedo, is of a similar description. It contains the history of a barber's son, who first serves a young student of quality at Alcala, which gives the author an opportunity of presenting us with some curious pictures of the manners and usages practised at that celebrated seminary of education. After *Paul* arrives at Madrid, the scenes described are in the

lowest abyss of vice and misery. He first becomes member of a fraternity which existed by what has been called *raising the wind*. The chief incidents of the romance consist of stratagems to procure a crust of dry bread, and having eat it, to appear with due decorum in public, by the art of fitting on a ruffle so as to suggest the idea of a shirt, and adjusting a cloak in such a manner as to make it be believed that there are clothes under it. Paul afterwards associates with a band of bravoës, and the consequences of an enterprise in which he engages oblige him to embark for the West Indies. An incident which occurs in this romance, while Paul is attending his young master at Alcala, seems to have suggested the story of the parasite, who eats the omelet of Gil Blas :—"L'ornement d'Oviedo, le flambeau de la philosophie, la huitieme merveille du monde."

Indeed, in most of the Spanish romances in this style of composition, we occasionally meet with stories of which the author of Gil Blas has availed himself. But of all the works in the *Gusto Picaresco*, Le Sage has been chiefly indebted to the *Relaciones dela Vida del Escudero Marcos de Obregon*;—not merely that the character of Gil Blas is formed on that of Obregon, but many of the incidents have been closely imitated. This work, which has been a subject of considerable curiosity in this country, was written towards the close of the 16th century by Vincent Espinel, born in 1551, and styling himself *Capellan del Rey en el Hospital de la Ciudad de Ronda*. It was first printed in 1618; it is related in the person of the hero, and is divided into three parts or *relaciones*, which are again divided into chapters. The prologue contains a story which is nearly the same with that in the introduction to Gil Blas, concerning the two scholars and the soul of the licentiate Pedro Garcias. In the second chapter several anecdotes are related, as examples of composure of temper, one of which is of a gentleman who, on receiving a challenge to meet his enemy at six in the morning, said, that he never rose till mid-day for his amusement, and could not be expected to rise at six to have his throat cut,\*—an answer which is

\* Decidle a vuestro amo, que digo yo, que para cosas que me importan de mucho gusto, no me suelo levantar hasta las doce del dia :



made by one of Gil Blas' masters, Don Mathias de Sylva, (l. 3. c. 8.) We are told in the following chapter, that Marcos entered into the service of Doctor Sagredo, a man of great arrogance and loquacity, and who was as much in the practice of bloodletting as the Sangrado of Le Sage. The chief occupation of Marcos was to attend the doctor's wife, Donna Mergellina, whom he introduced to a barber lad of his acquaintance, and an intrigue is detailed, of which the incidents are precisely the same as those in the history of Diego the *Garçon Barbier*, in Gil Blas. Indeed Diego mentions, in the course of his relation, that the attendant of Mergellina was called Marcos Obregon. After leaving the service of the doctor and experiencing various adventures, Marcos arrives one night at a hermitage, where he recounts to the recluse the early events of his life. Having shown a taste for learning in his youth, he was sent by his father, under care of a muleteer, to Salamanca. On the way he meets with a parasite, who, by the most extravagant flattery, contrives to sup at his expense, and having satisfied his hunger, declares that there is a grandee in the neighbourhood who would give two hundred ducats to see such an ornament of literature. Marcos having repaired to the house finds that the master is blind, and is jeeringly told by the parasite that the proprietor would give two hundred ducats to see him or any one. In the course of the journey to Salamanca we have also a story which occurs in Gil Blas, of the amorous muleteer, who, in order to carry on an intrigue, more commodiously disperses the company in the *posada* at Cacabelos. Instead of going to study at Salamanca, young Marcos enters into the service of the Count of Lemos, and afterwards of the Duke of Medina Sidonia. While in the employment of the latter, he embarks from the south of Spain, with other domestics of the duke, for Italy. In the course of the voyage they land at an islet near the coast of Majorca, and during their stay habitually repair to a delightful cave in a wood for pleasure and refreshment. They are warned by the governor of the island of the danger they incur by this practice, as the spot is frequently resorted to by Turkish corsairs.

que por què quiere que para matarme me levante tan de manana? y bolviendose del otro lado, se tornò a dormir.



This notice is disregarded, and on the following day the party is attacked by pirates. Supposing that some of their friends, disguised as Turks, had merely wished to alarm them, they do not take the proper measures for defence, and are accordingly overpowered and made prisoners. Marcos is carried to Algiers, where he is sold to a master whose daughter falls in love with him. All these incidents have been literally copied in the history of Don Raphael, in *Gil Blas*. Like Don Raphael, too, Marcos Obregon, on his escape from Algiers, first lands at Genoa. While at Milan a courtesan, called Camilla, contrives to elope with his baggage, and to possess herself of a valuable ring by means of the same stratagem by which *Gil Blas* is duped in the adventure of the *Hotel Garni*. From Spain Don Marcos returns to his own country, and towards the end of the work he again meets his old master Doctor Sagredo, with whom he has a long conversation. While in his company he falls under the power of banditti, and is confined in a cave which was the haunt of these outlaws and their captain Roque Amador. During his detention in this captivity the robbers bring to the cavern a lady, who proves to be Donna Mergellina, the wife of Doctor Sagredo. With her Marcos soon after contrives to escape from the cave, and arrives in safety at Madrid. This adventure, which is the termination of the Spanish work, has been placed by Le Sage near the commencement of his entertaining, but, it must be confessed, not very original production.

Le Sage has only imitated the more polite knavery of those Spanish novels which were written in the *Gusto Picaresco*. The deeper scenes of vice and wretchedness, depicted in such forcible, though not very pleasing colours, in *Paul the Sharper*, and *Lazaro de Tormes*, form a species of sombre gaiety peculiar to the Spaniards. The works which in this country approach nearest to that taste, are, *De Foe's Bampfylde Moore Carew*, and the *Jonathan Wild* of Fielding.

It may now be proper to mention a few of the comic romances which appeared in France in the course of the seventeenth century. They were nearly coeval with the heroic romances to be afterwards mentioned, and, like

them, preceded the introduction of the modern novel; but they are not of such scarceness as to require, nor such merit as to deserve, a particular analysis. The earliest and most celebrated is Scarron's\* *ROMAN COMIQUE*, so called from its relating the adventures of a troop of comedians, or strolling players, during their residence in Mans, and its neighbourhood. The idea of writing a work of this description first occurred to the author on his arrival at Mans, to take possession of a benefice to which he had been presented. It was suggested by some striking peculiarities of local scenery, and some ludicrous incidents which happened to a company of actors who were there at the time. Nor were strollers of this description so far beneath the notice of genius and refined satire, nor were the talents of the author so misemployed, as in this age and country we may be apt to imagine. In the time of Scarron these persons were treated with absurd attention and respect, by the families who inhabited those districts through which they passed. Their consequent extravagance and conceit provoked and merited chastisement, and was not considered undeserving the satire of such writers as Scarron and Le Sage.

The work commences with a grotesque description of the equipage of a company of strolling players, who arrive at Mans on their way to Alençon, having been forced to leave the town in which they had last performed, on account of their door-keeper having murdered an officer of the intendant of the province. They agree to act for one night in the tennis court; but, as the whole company was not expected till the following day, a difficulty arises from the smallness of their number, which consisted of a young man, called Destin, who usually played the parts of the heroes and lovers; Rancune, and a single actress. This objection is obviated by Rancune, who observed that he had once performed a drama alone, acting a king, queen, and ambassador, in the same scene. A second difficulty, however, occurs from one of the other division of the troop having the key of the wardrobe. M. Rappiniere, the *Lieutenant de Prevot*, who had examined the strollers on

\* See Appendix, No. 2.

their arrival, presents the actress with an old robe belonging to his wife, and the male performers are invested with the garments of two young men, who were playing a match at tennis.

In a few minutes every thing is arranged. The spectators having taken their places, a dirty sheet rises, and Destin is discovered in the character of Herod, lying on a mattress, with a basket on his head for a crown, and repeating, in the tones of Mondori,

Fantome injurieux, qui troubles mon repos !\*

The actress performs the parts of Mariamne and Salome, while Rancune gives universal satisfaction in all the other characters of the piece. In the most interesting scene of the tragedy, however, the two young men, who had now finished their match at tennis, rush on the stage to vindicate the habits worn by Herod and Phrerora. Some of the spectators espouse one part, and some another; and the tragedy concludes with distresses more real, though less heroic, than the death of Mariamne, and the despair of the Jewish monarch.

After this affray there follows an amusing account of a supper given to the actors by one of the inhabitants of Mans. On the following day the rest of the players arrive, and among others, Mad. L'Etoile, the *soi-disant* sister of Destin, and Leander, his valet, who already aspired to the first situation in the company. They continue to act for some time at Mans, and at length are invited to perform at a villa in the neighbourhood, but a short while before the entertainment commences, one of the actresses is forcibly carried off while rehearsing her part in the garden. The other performers set out in quest of her, and the second half of the work chiefly consists of the adventures they meet with in their pursuit.

\* This was the play of Marianne, by Tristan L'Hermite. Mondori died in consequence of the violence with which he had represented the transports of Herod, as Montfleury is said to have expired while acting the furies of Orestes. It was said on one of these occasions: "Il n'y aura plus de poete qui ne vcuille avoir l'honneur de crever un comedien en sa vie."

Of this romance the more serious part relates to the amours of Destin and Mad. L'Etoile, and the story of Leander, who proves to be a young man of fashion, but having been captivated with the beauty of one of the actresses, he had associated himself to the strolling company. The more comical portion consists in the delineation of the characters of Rancune and Ragotin, and an account of their absurdities. Of these the former, as his name imports, was noted for malice and envy. He found something to blame in every one of his own profession; Bellerose was stiff; Mondori harsh; Floridor frigid—from all which he wished it to be inferred, that he himself was the only faultless comedian. At the time when the pieces of Hardi were acted, he played the part of the nurse under a mask, and since the improvement in the drama, had performed the confidants and ambassadors. Ragotin was an attorney, who, falling in love with Mad. L'Etoile, attached himself to the company; he wrote immeasurable quantities of bad poetry, and on one occasion proposed reading to the players a work of his own composition, entitled *Les Faits et Gestes de Charlemagne en vingt quatre Journées*. A great part of the romance is occupied with the ridiculous distresses into which this absurd character falls, partly by his own folly, and partly by the malice of Rancune. These are sometimes amusing, but are generally quite extravagant, and exceed all bounds of probability.

There are also a number of episodes in the *Roman Comique*, as *L'Amante Invisible*—a *Trompeur Trompeur et Demi*, &c., which bear a strong resemblance to the *Nouvelles Tragi-Comiques*, by the same author. The scene of these episodes is invariably laid in Spain; they are always declared to be translated from the language of that country, and many of them are so in fact. All of them are love stories, containing a good deal of intrigue, and terminating happily.

It is said to have been the intention of Scarron, to have added a third part to the *Roman Comique*; indeed, in its present state, it ends very abruptly, which has induced different authors to attempt to bring it to a close. One continuation, written under the fictitious name of M. Offray, conducts the troop to Alençon, where Ragotin undergoes

disgraces equally extravagant, but less entertaining than those which he had formerly experienced. In another succeeding part, by the Abbé Preschac, Ragotin is again the principal character, and is much occupied in persuading a quack doctor, whom he believes to be a magician, to forward the success of his passion for Mad. L'Étoile. In a third sequel, which is by an anonymous author, the part of Ragotin is entirely abandoned, as also that of Rancune, and the reader is presented with a continuation of the more serious part of the romance, particularly the story of Destin, who turns out to be a son of the Count de Glaris, having been changed at nurse according to the Irish fashion.

The Roman Comique has also been versified by M. d'Orvilliers, and published in that poetical form at Paris, in 1733. Fontaine, too, has written a comedy, which comprehends most of the characters and best situations in the work of Scarron.

In the representations of Scarron, the provincial manners of the age in which the author lived are delineated, and he has exhibited, in lively and striking colours, what has been termed *le ridicule Campagnard*. The absurdities of the citizens of Paris have been painted by Furetiere,\* in his ROMAN BOURGEOIS, which, in the commencement, describes the ridiculous courtship by a counsellor, called Nicodemus, of Javotte, the daughter of a rascally attorney. Nicodemus ingratiates himself with the father of his mistress, by writing his papers for tenpence a sheet, and pleading his causes for half fees. Matters are almost finally arranged, when every thing is interrupted by the unexpected appearance of a girl, called Lucretia, who claimed a previous promise of marriage; and before Nicodemus had disentangled himself from this engagement, another lover presented himself, who was preferred by the father of Javotte. This intruder was an advocate, as well as his rival. The only time he had ever appeared at the bar, was when, twenty years before, he took the oaths to observe the regulations of court, to which he strictly adhered, as he never enjoyed an opportunity of transgressing

\* See Appendix, No. 3.



them. But he possessed a considerable fortune of his own, a great part of which he had laid out in the purchase of old china, and black-letter books with wooden bindings. His dress formed a memorial of all the fashions that had prevailed in France for two centuries. In order to qualify herself for such a husband, Javotte had been allowed to frequent an assembly of wits, which was attended by a young gentleman, called Pancroce, who persuaded her to elope with him.

In this romance there are some spirited sketches, considerable fertility of delineation, and knowledge of the human character; but the portraits, like those in the *Roman Comique*, too often degenerate into caricatures.

The origin of *POLITICAL ROMANCE* has been traced as far back as the *Cyropædia* of Xenophon. Whether that celebrated performance be intended as a romance or history, has been the subject of much controversy. The basis of that part which relates the events of the life of Cyrus, from his fortieth year till his death, may be historically true; but the details of his childhood and education, which embrace the period from his birth to his sixteenth year, must be entirely the offspring of the author's imagination.

I am not certain, whether under this class of romances I should comprehend the *Utopia* of Sir Thomas More. Every thing in that work is indeed imaginary; but, as no particular story is carried on, it may rather be accounted a political treatise than a romance. Like the writings of other speculative politicians, its origin was derived from the Republic of Plato. The *Utopia*, like the Commonwealth of that philosopher, is the ideal picture of a nation which would indeed be poor and wretched, but which in the representation of the author is perfectly happy. By the detail of its institutions, he obliquely censures the defects of existing governments, and proposes a more perfect model as a subject of imitation.

The author feigns, that while at Antwerp he had met with a person of the name of Raphael, who had accompanied Americo Vespucci to the New World. While on this voyage he had visited the island of *Utopia*, the name of which imports its non-existence. The first book, which is



merely introductory, contains a dialogue chiefly on government, that passed between the author and this imaginary person. In the second book, the traveller gives a geographical description of the island; the relations of the inhabitants in social life, their magistrates, their arts, their systems of war and religion. On the latter subject, which could hardly be expected from the practice of the author, the most unbounded toleration is granted. The greater part of the inhabitants believed in one Spirit, all-powerful and all-pervading; but others practised the worship of heroes, and the adoration of stars. A community of wealth is a fundamental principle of this republic, and the structure what might be expected from such a basis. Indeed the interest of the Utopia arises solely from the classic elegance of its style, and the curiosity which is naturally felt concerning the sentiments of distinguished characters.

This work was written about 1516, and soon became the admiration of all the classical scholars of the age. An English translation, by Robinson, has been lately published by Mr. Dibdin, with a literary introduction. The life of Sir Thomas More has been written by his son-in-law, Roper, by his great-grandson, More, and within these few years by Mr. Cayley: but the subject is too copious and important to admit of abridgement here. His character was indeed clouded by superstition, and the persecuting zeal by which the votaries of the Roman Catholic persuasion are too often distinguished, but there remains ample room for admiration in the splendour of his legal acquirements, the unrivalled felicity of his temper, and, above all, the depth and elegance of his classical learning, more wonderful, if we consider the country in which he lived, the multiplicity and importance of his avocations, and his premature fate.—“*Quid tandem non praestitisset admirabilis ista naturae felicitas, si hoc ingenium instituisset Italia, si totum Musarum sacris vacaret, si ad justam frugem ac veluti autumnum suum maturisset?*”

Sir Thomas More's Utopia suggested many speculative works, somewhat in the form of a romance, concerning perfect systems of government. Of this description is

Harrington's *Oceana*, which appeared in England about the middle of the 17th century, and though it be the model of a perfect republic, is perhaps the most rational of all similar productions.

The *ARGENIS* of Barclay is usually numbered among political romances, though, I think, it is entitled to be thus ranked more from the disquisitions introduced, than from any very obvious analogy which the story bears to political incidents.

The author was of a Scotch family, but was born in France in 1582. Offended, it is said, at the request of James I. to translate the *Arcadia* into Latin, he composed the *Argenis*, to show he could write a better original. It was completed and published in 1621, which was the year of the author's death.

*Argenis* is represented as the daughter and heiress of Meliander, King of Sicily, and the romance chiefly consists of the war carried on to obtain her hand, by two rivals, Lycogenes, a rebellious subject of Meliander, and Poliarchus, Prince of Gaul.

It is generally believed that all the incidents in the *Argenis* have an allusion to the political transactions which took place in France during the War of the League, but it is difficult to determine with precision what are the particular events or characters represented. Each commentator has applied them according to his own fancy, for which the indefinite nature of the composition gave ample scope. Meliander, however, it seems to be universally allowed, is intended for Henry III. *Argenis* typifies the succession of the crown; Lycogenes is the family of Guise, or the whole faction of the league; Poliarchus, Henry IV., or the aggregate of his party. The most minute incidents in the romance have been also historically applied, but in a manner so forced and capricious, that they might as plausibly be wrested to correspond with the political events in any age or country, as those which occurred in France towards the close of the 16th century. On the whole, there appears little to distinguish the *Argenis* from the common heroic romance, except that there are hardly any episodes introduced, and that it contains a great number of political disquisitions,

in which such high monarchical notions are generally expressed, that the author has been frequently accused as the advocate of arbitrary principles of government. We are informed in a Latin life of Barclay, that it was a favourite work of Cardinal Richelieu, and suggested to him many of his political expedients. Cowper, the poet, recommends *Argenis* to his correspondents, Mr. Rose and Lady Hesketh, as the most amusing romance that ever was written. "It is," says he in a letter to the former, "interesting in a high degree—richer in incident than can be imagined—full of surprises which the reader never forestalls, and yet free from all entanglement and confusion. The style, too, appears to me to be such as would not dishonour Tacitus himself." The Latinity, however, of Barclay, has, on the other hand, been severely ridiculed in the celebrated Spanish work, *Fra Gerundio*. "There you have the Scotchman, John Barclay, who would not say *exhortatio* to escape the flames, but *parænesis*, which signifies the same, but is a little more of the Greek; nor *obedire*, but *decedere*, which is of more abstruse signification, and is equivocal into the bargain."

Though the beautiful fiction of *Telemachus* be rather an epic poem in prose, than a romance, it seems to have led the way to several political romances, or, at least, to have nourished a taste for this species of composition.

The *Cyropædia* of Xenophon, which may be considered perhaps as the origin of all political romance, seems more particularly to have suggested two works, which appeared in France about the commencement of the 18th century, *Les Voyages de Cyrus* and *Le Repos de Cyrus*. Of these the former work is by the Chevalier Ramsay, the friend of Fenelon, and tutor to the sons of the Pretender. The author has chosen, as the subject of his romance, that part of the life of Cyrus, which extends from the sixteenth to the fortieth year of his age, a period of which nothing is said in the *Cyropædia*. During this interval, Ramsay has made his hero travel according to fancy, and by this means takes occasion to describe the manners, religion, and policy, of the countries which are visited, as also some of the principal events in their history. The Persian prince wanders through Greece, Syria, and Egypt, and in

the course of his journey enjoys long philosophical and political conversations with Zoroaster, Solon, and the prophet Daniel. What is said concerning the manners of the different nations, is fortified by passages from the ancient philosophers and poets. The author exhibits considerable acquaintance with chronology and history, and enters profoundly into the fables of the ancients, from which he attempts to show that the leading truths of religion are to be found in the mythological systems of all nations. His work, however, is rather a treatise intended to form the mind of a young prince than a fiction. The only romantic incident is the love of Cyrus for Cassandana, which occupies a considerable part of the first book, where the usual obstacles of the prohibition of parents, and a powerful rival, are interposed to the happiness of the lovers. In 1728, a satire on Ramsay's Cyrus, entitled *La Nouvelle Cyropædie, ou Reflexions de Cyrus sur ses Voyages*, was printed at Amsterdam. In this work, Cyrus, having become master of Asia, complains, in six evening conversations with his confidant Araspes, of the pedantic and ridiculous part he is made to act in his travels. A serious criticism was written by the Pere Vinot, to which Ramsay made a suitable reply.

*Le Repos de Cyrus* embraces the same period of the life of the Persian prince as the work of Ramsay, and comprehends his journey into Media, his chase on the frontiers of Assyria, his wars with the king of that country, and his return to Persia.

Most of the works which come under the class of political romances, are but little interesting in their story, and mankind have long been satisfied of the folly of speculations concerning perfect systems of government. Indeed, in a history of fiction, there are only two kinds of compositions, which seem entitled to minute analysis; first, those which, though comparatively imperfect, have been the earliest models of a peculiar series of romances; and secondly, the most perfect production of the order to which it belongs—the *patriarch*, as it were, of the family, and most *illustrious of the descendants*. In many instances, however, the most distinguished work of the class is so well known and popular, that any detail concerning it

might appear tiresome and superfluous. This is peculiarly the case with the *Telemaque*, which has been familiar to every one almost from childhood; and accordingly, it is more suitable to analyze the next most perfect specimen, which, in the class of political romances, happens not to be very generally known. In this view it may be proper to give some account of the romance of *SETHOS*.

This work, which was first published in 1731, was written by the Abbé Terrasson, a *Savant*, who in his *éloge*, pronounced by D'Alembert, is represented as at the head of the practical philosophers of his age. "Calm, simple, and candid, he was so far," says D'Alembert, "from soliciting favours, that he did not know the names of the persons by whom they were distributed. More a philosopher than Democritus, he did not even deign to laugh at the absurdities of his contemporaries; and equally indifferent about others and himself, he seemed to contemplate from the planet Saturn the Earth which we inhabit."

The author of *Sethos* feigns, in his preface, that his work is translated from the Greek MS. of a writer who probably lived in the reign of Marcus Aurelius. After bestowing due praise on the *Telemaque*, and perhaps more than due on the *Voyages de Cyrus*, he observes, that his romance does not merely contain, like these works, a course of education, but the practical application of its principles to the varied events of life. Another object of Terrasson was to exhibit whatever has been ascertained concerning the antiquities, manners, and customs of the ancient Egyptians, or the origin of sciences and arts. It is in this view, perhaps, that *Sethos* is chiefly valuable, and in fact there would be few antiquarian works more precious, had the author, who was profoundly learned, appended in notes the original authorities from which he derived his information.

About fifty years before the Trojan war, Osoroth, when somewhat advanced in life, succeeded to the throne of Memphis, the second in dignity of the four great sovereignties of Egypt. Previous to his accession he had espoused Nepthe, Princess of This, another Egyptian monarchy, and by her he had a son called *Sethos*, the hero of the romance. Osoroth, who has many traits of



character in common with Louis XV., is represented as one of those feeble, indolent, and indifferent princes, who are the best or worst of kings as chance furnishes them with good or bad administrators of the royal authority. This monarch committed the management of state affairs to Nepthe; and what seemed to the public an enlightened choice, was nothing but the result of his natural indifference. In fact, the queen governed admirably, partly owing to her own distinguished talents, and partly to the councils of Amedes, a sage whom she consulted on every important occurrence. When Sethos was eight years old, the queen, whose health had been long enfeebled, was seized with a dangerous illness. Meanwhile Osoroth, who, though the monarch of a great people, presented the singular spectacle of not knowing how to employ his time, had become entangled by the assiduities and arts of Daluca, a lady of the court; and the queen foresaw with pain, that in the event of her death, the destiny of Sethos might depend on this worthless woman. She at length expired, after having intrusted her son to the wise Amedes, and having, at the same moment, consigned to the young prince a casket of precious jewels, recommending to him above all carefully to preserve a heart-shaped emerald, adorned with figures in relief of Osiris, Isis, and Horus.

As the solemn invocations for the health of Nepthe had afforded the author an opportunity of representing some of the religious rites of Egypt, her pompous funeral furnishes an occasion of describing their obsequies. The Egyptians, according to Herodotus, were the first people who believed in the immortality of the soul, and it appeared from the simplicity of their palaces, compared with the magnificence of their tombs, that they were less occupied with their transitory dwellings on earth than with the prospect of their everlasting abodes. Ere the body of a prince could be conveyed by Charon to the Labyrinth in the midst of Lake Mæris, a judgment, whether the deceased was worthy of funeral rites, was pronounced by forty-one just and inexorable judges. The high priest of Memphis delivered on the present occasion a funeral oration on the late queen—"Portrait," says D'Alembert, "que Tacite eut admiré, et dont Platon eut conseillé la lecture a tous les Rois."



On the death of Nepthe the wicked Daluca having first become regent, and being afterwards espoused by Osoroth, formed an administration, which was a complete contrast to that of the late queen. Her dislike of Sethos was increased by giving birth to two sons, and in order that her machinations against that prince might succeed, she began by corrupting the morals of the court. The progress of depravity, and the methods by which it was produced, are portrayed with much force of satire. Meanwhile the education of Sethos commenced, a subject which is introduced by a beautiful but succinct account of the state of science and arts in Egypt, as also by a description of the palace and gardens of the kings of Memphis, which formed one vast museum, stored with every means of exercising the talents and preserving the knowledge of mankind.

The admirable genius of young Sethos seconded well the instructions of the sage Amedes, who prepared him by every exercise of mind and body for those trials which, from his situation, would probably ensue. Several instances of the prince's courage and address are related, as his being the first who descended from the Great Pyramid with his face towards the spectators, and his taking captive a huge serpent which laid waste a province of the kingdom. After having given sufficient proofs of prudence and courage, Amedes resolved secretly to procure for his pupil, now sixteen years of age, the supreme honour of initiation, a dignity which could only be attained by uncommon fortitude and sufferings. The whole process of this august ceremony—the subterraneous temples, and palaces, and gardens of the Egyptian priests, are finely delineated, and form by much the most interesting portion of the work.

Preparatory to the initiation, Amedes having obtained permission for his pupil to visit for a few months the temples of Egypt, conducted him by night to the Great Pyramid. They entered it, and reached at length that mysterious Well, concerning which so much has been said by travellers. (Clarke's Travels, vol. iii. p. 138, &c.) Down this they descended by the little secret steps of iron, and approached two brazen gates, which opened softly,

but shut with a tremendous crash. Sethos beheld at a distance, through iron grates, high illuminated arcades, and heard the most harmonious music, which he was told by Amedes (who had been himself initiated) proceeded from priests and priestesses in a subterraneous temple. He was also informed that he had now an opportunity of entering on the trials preparatory to initiation,—trials which required the most heroic courage and greatest prudence. Sethos, of course, determined to proceed, undismayed by an alarming inscription on the portal through which he now passed.

After leaving Amedes, Sethos walked more than a league without discovering any new object. He came at length to an iron door, and a little farther on to three men, "*armés d' un casque qui etoit chargé d' une tete d' Anubis: c' est ce qui donna lieu a Orphée de faire de ces trois hommes les trois tetes du chien Cerbere, qui permettoit l' entrée de l' Enfer sans en permettre la sortie.*" This idea is carried on through the whole of the author's subterraneous description, and is doubtless the foundation of Warburton's hypothesis concerning the sixth book of Virgil. The author relates in a most striking manner the corporeal purification of Sethos by fire and water and air, subsequent to which his soul is in like manner refined by invocations and instructions, by silence, solitude, and neglect.

At the conclusion of his initiation Sethos was conducted through all the subterranean abodes of the priests, the description of which is almost copied from the sixth book of Virgil. No class of men have been so splendid in their buildings as priests, and as Egypt was the country of all others in which they were most powerful, they had nowhere erected such magnificent structures. Nothing can be more happy than Terrasson's picture of the subterranean Elysium, and the art with which the priests employed its scenes in the illusory visions which they presented to those who consulted them. The mysteries of the Pantheon are also unveiled, and the author concludes his highly interesting account of the initiation with a description of the Isiack pomp, and the manifestation of Sethos to the people.

The romance now becomes less amusing, and the author seems to be deserted by his genius as soon as he quits the sombre magnificence of ancient superstition. By the bad management of Daluca, the kingdom of Memphis was involved in a quarrel with the neighbouring monarchies. Sethos departed for the seat of war, where he distinguished himself, not merely by his wonderful valour, but by extraordinary warlike inventions. Owing, however, to the treachery of the general of Memphis, who had been commanded by Queen Daluca to rid her of Sethos, he was desperately wounded, and left for dead in a nocturnal skirmish with the enemy. Being afterwards discovered to be alive by some Ethiopian soldiers, he was sold by them as a slave to the Phœnicians, whom he accompanied in a great expédition to Taprobana (Ceylon). After the establishment of the Phœnicians on that island, Sethos, now under the name of Cheres, recommended himself so strongly to the commander of the expedition by his wisdom and valour, that he is furnished with a fleet to make a voyage of discovery round Africa. In this enterprise Sethos unites the skill of Columbus with the benevolence of Cook and the military genius of Cæsar. He civilizes Guinea, and forms a vast commercial establishment, which he names New Tyre.

Meanwhile an impostor, called Azores, availing himself of a report, now generally spread through Egypt, that Sethos was yet alive, resolved to personate the prince, and being aided by a host of Arabians, he besieged Hieropolis, the capital of the King of This, whose daughter, the Princess Mnevie, he had vainly sought in marriage. Intelligence of this imposture having reached Sethos, he arrived in Egypt, still bearing the name of Cheres, defeated Azores under the walls of Hieropolis, and drove him back to Arabia. Sethos was accordingly received with the utmost joy and gratitude by the King of This, and a mutual passion gradually arose between him and the Princess Mnevie. He procured from the other three kings of Egypt the title of Conservator, and general of the Egyptian forces, in which capacity he again defeated Azores, who had attacked the territories of Memphis with a force he had anew assembled.

While engaged in this war, the Princess Mnevie, anxious at the absence and dangers of her lover, consulted the priests of Heliopolis with respect to his destiny, which furnishes another opportunity to the author of giving a representation, in which he excels, of the solemn witchery employed by the priests of Egypt. Sethos, on his return to Memphis, to which he conducted Azores as a captive, commenced the public trial and examination of that impostor in presence of the king and princes. The slave instantly recognises his master, and the true Sethos, at length throwing aside his disguise, gives incontestable proofs of his identity. Osoroth immediately resigns the crown in his favour, and Daluca poisons herself. Sethos, after reigning five days, and causing his name to be inscribed in the list of the kings of Egypt as Sethos *Sosis*, or Sethos the Conservator, gives up the kingdom to his half-brother Prince Beon, one of the sons of Daluca. Not satisfied with this, he procures the consent of the Princess Mnevie to marry his second brother Pemphos, who had been long attached to her. Sethos himself, with the title of King Conservator, retires to the temples of the priests of Memphis, whither ambassadors are frequently sent to him from different kings, and he is almost daily consulted by his brothers.

This extravagant disinterestedness of the hero, in resigning his kingdom to one brother and his mistress to another, is the circumstances at which the reader of Sethos is most disappointed and displeased. Terrasson might consider the *summum bonum* as consisting in geometry and retirement, but this is not the general sentiment of the readers of romance. It is very sublime, indeed, to give up a kingdom and a mistress, but the Conservator of Egypt must have sometimes thought, and the reader of Sethos will always think, that he had better have retained them both :—

Lorsque Je prête à tous un main secourable,  
Par quel destin faut il que ma vertu m'accable!

Indeed, the whole of the latter part of Sethos—his voyage round Africa, and his wars with the impostor, are insuf-

ferably tiresome. The earlier books, however, are uncommonly interesting, and D'Alembert, while he confesses that the philosophy and erudition which the author had introduced were little to the taste of an age and nation which sacrificed every thing to amusement, declares, "qu' il n' y a rien dans le *Telemaque* qui approche d' un grand nombre de caracteres, de traits de morale, de reflexions fines et de discours quelquefois sublimes qu' on trouve dans *Sethos*." "The author of *Sethos*," says Gibbon, (*Miscellanies*, vol. iv. p. 195,) "was a scholar and philosopher. His book has far more originality and variety than *Telemachus*: yet *Sethos* is forgotten, and *Telemachus* will be immortal. That harmony of style, and the great talent of speaking to the heart and passions, which Fenelon possessed, was unknown to Terrasson. I am not surprised that Homer was admired by the one and criticised by the other." Indeed Terrasson is better known, at least in this country, as a second *Zoilus*, than as the author of *Sethos*.

Besides its intrinsic merit, the romance of *Sethos* is curious, as being the foundation of the hypothesis concerning the 6th book of the *Æneid* maintained by Warburton in his *Divine Legation of Moses*, which was first published in 1738, seven years after the appearance of *Sethos*. Servius, one of the earliest commentators on Virgil, had long ago remarked, that many things in the *Æneid* were delivered according to the profound learning of the Egyptian theology (*Multa per altam scientiam theologicorum Ægyptiorum*). This idea is carried on through the whole of Terrasson's description of the subterranean dwellings of the Egyptian priests, and the initiation of his hero. "Mais on voit clairement dans les trois épreuves du feu, de l' eau et de l' air, les trois purifications que les ames doivent essayer avant que de revenir a la vie, et que le plus grand poete des Latins a empruntées dans le sixieme livre de son *Eneide*; *infectum cluitur scelus aut exuritur igni*, sans omettre la circonstance de la suspension a l' air agité ou aux vents: Le fleuve d' oubli et la porte d' ivoire y ont leur place." And again, "J' aurois lieu de faire ici une invocation semblable a celles des poetes qui entreprennent une description des Enfers.—Qu' il me soit



permis de reveler les choses qu' J' ai apprises, et de mettre au jour ce qui se passoit dans les entrailles de la terre et sous le voile impenetrable du plus profond silence. A peine Sethos fut il descendu dans le souterrain du coté du temple superieur, qu' il fut extremement surpris d' entendre des cris d' enfans. Orphée qui en avoit ete surpris comme lui, supposa depuis que les enfans morts a la mamelle etoient placés a l' entrée des enfers :”

*Continuo auditæ voces, vagitus et ingens,  
Infantumque animæ fientes in limine primo;  
Quos dulcis vitæ exortes, et ab ubere raptos  
Abstulit atra dies, et funere mersit acerbo.*

“En avançant Sethos se trouva dans un lieu enchanté qu' on appelloit l' Elisée. Ici comme le jour tomboit d' une hauteur de cent quarante pieds, il etoit affoibli ; et l' ombre des arbres dont ce jardin etoit rempli l' affoiblissant encore, il sembloit que l' on ne jouissoit en plein jour que d' un clair de Lune. C' ést ce qui fist naître a Orphée la pensée de donner a l' Elisée un Soleil et des astres particuliers :”

——Solemque suum sua sidera norunt.

Terrason, however, declares, that the allegories of the Egyptians “sont peu de chose en comparaison des mysteres de Ceres institués a Eleusine sur le modele de ceux d' Isis.” Now Warburton, in the second book of his *Divine Legation*, while inculcating that all legislators have confirmed the belief in a future state of rewards and punishments by the establishment of mysteries, contends that the allegorical descent of *Æneas* into hell was no other than an enigmatical representation of his initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries, “which came originally from Egypt, the fountain head of legislation.” On this system he attempts to show that the whole progress through Tartarus and Elysium is symbolically conformable to what has been ascertained concerning the mysteries. This appropriation of Warburton was first remarked by Cooper in his *Life of Socrates*, where he says, “Warburton supposes the whole sixth book of the *Æneid*



to be a description of the Eleusinian mysteries, which, though he lets it pass for his own, was borrowed, or more properly stolen, from a French romance, entitled the *Life of Sethos*." Gibbon, in his *Critical Observations on the Sixth Book of the Æneid*, where he completely refutes Warburton's hypothesis, remarks that "Some have sought for the Poetic Hell in the mines of Epirus, and other sin the mysteries of Egypt. As this last notion was published in French six years before it was invented in English, the learned author of the *Divine Legation* has been severely treated by some ungenerous adversaries. Appearances, it must be confessed, wear a very suspicious aspect; but what are appearances," he sarcastically subjoins, "when weighed against his lordship's declaration, that this is a point of honour in which he is particularly delicate, and that he may venture a boast that no author was ever more averse to take to himself what belonged to another? (*Letters to a late Professor of Oxford*.) Besides, he has enriched this mysterious discovery with many collateral arguments which would for ever have escaped all inferior critics. In the case of Hercules, for instance, he demonstrates that the initiation and the descent to the shades were the same thing, because an ancient has affirmed that they were different."

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## CHAPTER XI.

Pastoral Romance—Arcadia of Sannazzaro—Diana—Astrée—Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia.

WE have seen in a former volume that Pastoral Romance occupied a place among the comparatively few and uninteresting prose fictions of the ancients, and that one very perfect specimen of this sort of composition, the *Daphnis and Chloe* of Longus, was presented to the world in the earliest ages of romance. It was to be expected, accordingly, that when the taste for prose fiction

became more prevalent than formerly, this easy and agreeable species of composition should not have been neglected. The very circumstance of so many works having appeared, of which the chief subject was turmoil and slaughter, led the mind, by a natural association, to wish to repose amid pastoral delights; and the beautiful descriptions of rural nature, which occasionally occurred in chivalrous romance, would suggest the idea of compositions devoted to the description of rustic manners and pastoral enjoyments. Another circumstance contributed perhaps to the formation of this taste. Virgil was one of the poets whose names had been venerated even amid the thickest shades of ignorance, and his works, at the first revival of literature, became the highest subject of wonder and imitation. Of his divine productions, the Eclogues form a distinguished part, and when books and manuscripts were scarcely to be procured, were probably the portion of his writings most generally known. This, perhaps, contributed in no inconsiderable degree to form a taste for pastoral compositions, while the comparative easiness of the task induced the authors to write the whole, or the greater part, of them in prose, and frequently to combine with ruder materials the descriptions and images of that bard, who was the object of universal admiration.

During the middle ages, indeed, pastoral compositions had been frequent, but they partook more of the nature of the eclogue, or drama, than of romance. The vapid productions of the Troubadours, contained, not the adventures of rural characters, but insipid or affected descriptions of nature. Among the works of the Trouveurs, there are some pastorals on the loves and adventures of shepherds and shepherdesses. In these there is often a good deal of nature and *naïveté* in the dialogue, but they differ little from each other. A poet goes out to walk, it is always in spring, and meets a beautiful shepherdess. Sometimes she calls in to her assistance the surrounding shepherds, who come up with all expedition, and put the lover to flight; but she more commonly accepts his propositions, of which the fulfilment is often very circumstantially described.

The Ameto of Boccaccio, which is a prose idyllium

with poetical sprinklings, bears a strong resemblance to the pastorals of the Troubadours, but is more rich in rural description. The scene is laid in ancient Etruria: seven nymphs recount the story of their loves, and each story concludes with eclogues, which were the first in the Italian language. Ameto, a young hunter, presides over this amorous assembly, whose adventures, like those in all subsequent pastoral romances, refer to real characters, as has been explained in a long letter by Sansovino; but his discoveries and elucidations are little interesting, except those which relate to Fiammetta and her loves with Caleone, by whom Boccaccio himself is designated.

Boccaccio's *Idyllium* may be justly regarded as the prototype of the *Arcadia* of Sannazzaro, which was written towards the end of the 15th century, and which, though it cannot itself be considered as a pastoral romance, yet appears to have first opened the field to that species of composition. Like the *Ameto*, it consists partly of verse and partly of prose, a mode of writing which was adopted in all subsequent pastoral romances. Of these, indeed, the prose generally constitutes the largest proportion, and sonnets or eclogues are only occasionally introduced for the sake of variety, or as a species of interlude. The *Arcadia*, however, is about equally divided between prose and verse, the principal intention of the author, as appears from his own words, being to write a series of eclogues; and he seems to have intermixed the prose relations merely in order to connect them. Nor does the *Arcadia* properly comprehend any story with a commencement and conclusion, which has always been considered essential to a romance. It entirely consists of a description of the employments and amusements of shepherds, whose actions and sentiments are generally well adapted to the simplicity of pastoral life. The author, who, under the names *Ergasto* and *Sincero*, is a principal character in the work, retires from Italy, on account of some love disappointment, to a plain on the summit of Mount Partenio, a beautiful region in *Arcadia*, possessed solely by shepherds. The pastoral inhabitants of this district meet together, and complain in alternate strains of the cruelty of their respective mistresses. They celebrate the festival of their

goddess Pales, or assemble round the tomb of some deceased shepherd, and rehearse his praise. Under the name of Massillia, whom the author feigns to have been the most respectable Sibyl of Arcadia, he laments the death of his mother. Funeral games are performed at her sepulchre, and Ergasto distributes prizes to those who excel in the various contests. The work also contains many disguised incidents, which allude to the misfortunes of the author's patrons, the exiled princes of Naples. He also recounts his amours with the beautiful Carmosina, celebrates her charms under the name of Amaranta, and laments her death under that of Phyllis. At length he is one morning accosted by a lovely Naiad, under whose protection he is conducted to the bottom of the deep, where he sees the grottoes in which all the streams of the earth have their source, particularly the Sebeto. A submarine excursion of this kind was a favourite notion with the Italian poets, in imitation probably of the descent of the shepherd Aristaeus in the fourth Georgic (l. 360, &c.) It is introduced by Tasso in the fourteenth canto of the Jerusalem, where the two knights who go in search of Rinaldo, are conducted by a magician into the bowels of the earth, (st. 37, &c.) A similar device is employed by Fracastoro in the Syphilis, (lib. II.) After his aquatic survey, Sannazzaro emerges, by a route which is described in a manner so unintelligible as to be of no use to future travellers, near the foot of a mountain in Italy, and concludes the work by his return to Naples, where he arrives much to his own satisfaction, and still more to that of the reader.

In the Arcadia, the eclogues are chiefly written in what are called *Versi Sdruciolì*, the invention of which has by some been attributed to Sannazzaro. They consist, for the most part, of lamentations for the death of a shepherd, or cruelty of a shepherdess. Sometimes, too, the swains contend in alternate strains for a reward, which is a crook, a lamb, or an obscene picture.\* These eclogues are, in a great measure, imitated from Virgil and other classics,

\* Il qual tiene nel suo mezzo dipinto il Rubicondo Priapo che strettissimamente abbraccia una Ninfa ed a mal grado di lei, &c.

with whose writings Sannazzaro had early rendered himself familiar, as a preparatory study to his admirable Latin compositions.

The pastoral dramas of Italy seem also to have suggested many incidents and fancies to the authors of pastoral romance. Thus, for example, Politian, in his *Orfeo*, which is the prototype of that elegant species of comedy, has employed the responsive Echo :—

Che fai tu Echo mentre ch' io ti chiamo?—*Amo.*

This conceit, of which there are some examples in the Greek *Anthologia*, and which Martial ridicules in his contemporary poets, has been frequently introduced by the Italian imitators of Politian, and with more or less absurdity by all pastoral romancers.

In the *Pastor Fido* there is the incident of a lover disguising himself as a female at a festival, in order to obtain a species of intercourse with his mistress, which, in his own character, he could not procure. This is a leading event in the principal subject of the *Astrea*, and is also introduced in one of the episodes of the *DIANA*, which was written in Spanish by George of Montemayor,\* about the middle of the 16th century, and is the earliest regular romance of a pastoral description. The scene is laid at the foot of the mountains of Leon; but it is impossible to tell what is the period of the action, such is the confusion of modern manners and ancient mythology. The characters alternately invoke the saints and fauns, and the destiny of one of the principal shepherdesses, who had been educated at a convent, is regulated by the oracles of Venus and Minerva.

Diana, the heroine of this work, was the fairest of those shepherdesses who inhabited the smiling meadows which are watered by the river Ezla. The young Sereno, who also dwelt on the banks of this stream, adored the beautiful Diana, who felt for him a reciprocal passion. They loved as in the age of gold, and their happiness was as complete as was consistent with innocence.

\* See Appendix, No. 4.



A felicity of this nature cannot continue long in a romance. Sereno, for some reason, which is not explained, is obliged to leave his native country, and departs after one of those interviews, the tenderness of which almost compensates the bitterness of separation. A melancholy period of absence is terminated by a more melancholy return, as he now finds his mistress in the arms of Delio, an unseemly shepherd, whom her father had compelled her to accept as a husband. The surrounding scenery reminds the lover of the happiness he had possessed, and of which he was now deprived. He sees his name interwoven with Diana's on the bark of the trees, and again views the fountain where they had pledged eternal faith.

While gazing on objects which excited such strong and painful emotions, he overhears the musical lament of the shepherd Sylvanus, a lover who had been rejected by Diana. He and Sereno, though formerly rivals, become friends from similarity of misfortune. Long they complain both in prose and rhyme of their unfaithful mistress; and, while thus employed, are accosted by a disconsolate shepherdess, who emerges from a thicket near the banks of the Ezla. They inform her of the cause of their grief, and she, in return, relates to them her story.

This damsel, whose name is Sylvania, had been accosted at the festival of Ceres by a beautiful shepherdess, with whom she formed a strong and sudden friendship. The religious ceremonies being concluded, the unknown shepherdess confesses to Sylvania that she is in disguise, and is, in fact, the shepherd Alanio. Then this ambiguous character fell at the feet of Sylvania, professed the most ardent affection, and entreated the forgiveness of the fair. From that moment Sylvania conceived the warmest attachment to the person who was now imploring her pardon. This suppliant, however, was not the shepherd Alanio, as was pretended, but the shepherdess Ysmenia, who, in sport, had assumed the character of her cousin and lover Alanio, to whom she had a striking resemblance; but Alanio, being informed by his mistress of the adventure, particularly of the hopeless passion conceived by Sylvania, resolved to avail himself of the incident. He forsook



Ysmenia, and attached himself to Sylvania, who readily transferred the affection she had formed for the false to the real Alanio. Ysmenia consoled herself for the loss of her lover, by coquetting with a shepherd of the name of Montano. Alanio, on hearing of this, whimsically resolved on recovering the affections of his former mistress. While thus employed, Montano resorted frequently to the cottage of Sylvania's father, in order to adjust with him their rights of pasturage; and, after a few visits, entirely forgot Ysmenia, and became deeply enamoured of Sylvania. Montano pursued Sylvania through the fields and forests; he, in turn, was pursued by Ysmenia, who was generally followed by Alanio. This *Brouillerie d'Amour* was suggested by an Italian pastoral drama, and reminds us of the loves of Pan and Echo in an Idyllium of Moschus:

Pan sighs for Echo o'er the lawn,  
Sweet Echo loves the dancing fawn,  
The dancing fawn fair Lyda charms;  
As Echo Pan's soft bosom warms,  
So for the fawn sweet Echo burns;  
Thus all inconstant in their turns,  
All fondly woo, are fondly wooed,  
Pursue, or are themselves pursued.

In these circumstances Sylvania had come to reside with an aunt who lived on the banks of the Ezla, and had learned, since her arrival, that Montano had returned to the feet of Ysmenia, and had been espoused by that shepherdess, who, at the same time, had given her sister in marriage to Alanio.

I know not whether the audience unravelled this story at the first hearing, but they agreed to meet this intricate damsel every morning in a solitary valley, where they sighed without restraint, and indulged in long conferences on the misfortunes of love, and discussions on questions of gallantry. The debates of this amorous society are considerably diversified by the arrival of those nymphs, who are about to relate their adventures, when interrupted by the informal gallantry of three satyrs. This incident serves to introduce a portly shepherdess

called Felismena, who, at a most critical moment, and unseen by all, transfixes these ardent lovers in succession with her arrows, and then bursting into view, commences her story in the following terms :

“ One day, shortly previous to my birth, a conversation took place between my parents concerning the judgment of Paris, in the course of which my mother complained that the apple had been refused to Minerva, and contended that it was due to her who united the perfections of mind to the beauties of person. In the course of the ensuing night Venus appeared to her in a dream, reproached her with ingratitude for the favours with which she had been loaded, and announced that the child, of which she was about to be delivered, would cost her the loss of life, and that her offspring would be agitated by the most violent passions which the resentment of Venus could inflict.

“ My mother was much troubled at this cruel sentence, till, on the departure of Venus, Minerva appeared, and comforted her by an assurance that her child would be distinguished by firmness of mind and feats of arms.

“ The first part of the threats of Venus was speedily accomplished, and my father, having early followed my mother to the tomb, I was left an orphan. Henceforth I resided at the house of a distant relative ; and, having attained my seventeenth year, became the victim of the offended goddess by falling in love with Don Felix, a young nobleman of the province in which I lived. The object of my affections felt a reciprocal passion, but his father, having learned the attachment which subsisted betwixt us, sent his son to court, with a view to prevent our union. Soon after his departure, I followed him in the disguise of a page, and discovered on the night of my arrival at the capital, by a serenade I heard him give, that Don Felix had already disposed of his affections. Without being recognised by him, I was admitted into his service, and was engaged by my former lover to conduct his correspondence with the mistress, who, since our separation, had supplanted me in his heart. From the disguise in which I appeared, she conceived for me the warmest attachment, and, perceiving that her best hope of enjoying frequent interviews with me was to indulge the expecta-

tions of her lover, she transmitted answers to Don Felix, which, though not decisive, were more lenient and encouraging than formerly. Exasperated, at length, by the cold return which I was obliged to make to her advances, she gradually replied in less favourable terms to Don Felix. The distress, with which he was in consequence affected, moved my compassion, and one day, while pressing his suit with the lady more vehemently than usual, she made an explicit and violent declaration of her sentiments in my behalf; and, having retired to her cabinet, expired immediately, in consequence of the agitation into which she had been thrown. Don Felix disappeared soon after the news of her death had reached him, and during the last twelvemonth I have roamed in the habit of a shepherdess from province to province in quest of the ungrateful fugitive."

A mistress serving her lover in capacity of a page, and employed by him to propitiate an obdurate fair one, is a common love adventure with the old novelists. There is a tale, founded on this incident, in the *Ecatommithi* of Cinthio, and another in *Bandello*, from which Shakspeare took the plot of *Twelfth Night*. These Italian novels were probably the origin of the above episode of Felismena, which seems, in turn, to have suggested the story of Protheus and Julia in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. It will be recollected, that while Protheus and Julia are mutually enamoured, the former is sent by his father from Verona to the court of Milan, to which he proceeds by sea. Soon after his arrival he falls in love with Sylvia, the duke's daughter. Julia follows him in disguise of a page, and discovers the estrangement of his affections by the evening music which he gives to the ear of his new mistress. She then enters into his service, and is employed by him to propitiate the affections of her rival. The outlines of this plot corresponds so closely with the Spanish romance, that there can be little doubt it was imitated by Shakspeare, who, besides, has copied the original in some minute particulars, which clearly evince the source from which the drama has been derived: as for example, in the letter which Protheus addresses to Julia, her rejection of it when offered by her waiting-maid, and the device by which she

afterwards attempts to procure a perusal, (Act i. Sc. ii.) In several passages, indeed, the dramatist has copied the language of the pastoral.

But while, in some respects, Shakspeare has thus closely followed the romance, he has departed from it in more essential incidents, in a manner (as usual with him) that rather injures than improves the story. In the *Diana*, the young man is sent on his travels by his father, in order to prevent an unsuitable marriage, but Protheus is despatched to Milan at the idle suggestion of a servant, and apparently for no other purpose than to give a commencement to the intrigue. Don Felix is indeed an unfaithful lover, yet his spirit, generosity, and honour, still preserve the esteem and interest of the reader; but the unprincipled villain, into whom he has been transformed in the drama, not only forsakes his mistress, but attempts to supplant his friend, and to supplant him by the basest artifice. The revival of affection, too, is much more natural and pleasing in the romance than in the play. In the former, Celia, the new flame of Felix, was then no longer in being, and his former mistress, as we shall afterwards find, had a fresh claim to his gratitude; but Protheus returns to Julia with as much levity as he had abandoned her, and apparently for no reason, except that his stratagem had failed, and that his fraud had been exposed. The story of Felismena seems also to have suggested the part of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster* relating to the disguise of Euphrasia, which forms the principal plot of that tragedy.

But to return to the romance. Felismena having finished her story, the three damsels, whom she had rescued from the satyrs, intimated that they were virgins consecrated to the service of Diana, and offered to conduct their companions to the temple of that goddess.

On the way thither they arrived at a delightful island in a lake, where, having entered a cottage, they discovered a shepherdess asleep in an elegant dishabille. This damsel, when awakened, insisted that it was her sighs that shook the trees of the valley, and her tears that fed the waters, by which the island was formed. It would have been contrary to pastoral etiquette to contest either the force of her sighs, or the abundance of her tears, for the

singular exuberance of which she accounted by relating her story, of which the substance is, that she had been beloved by a father and son ; that one night she had given a rendezvous to the latter, during which he had been transfixed by an arrow from the hand of the jealous parent, who had been on watch, and had not discovered that this rival was his son ; but that as soon as he recognised him he fell on the body of his child, and stabbed himself with a dagger. The lady did not interfere in the infliction of this voluntary punishment, but, terrified at the spectacle, she had fled from the spot, and had not stopped till she entered the cottage where she was discovered asleep by our travellers.

Belisa, for that was the name of the shepherdess, after being completely roused, agreed to accompany the nymphs of Diana to the temple of the goddess, where the whole troop arrived after a long journey. From this superb edifice, which was situated in a plain, surrounded by an almost impenetrable wood, there came forth a band of nymphs of inexpressible beauty, with a dignified priestess at their head, who entertained her visitors with much hospitality. They were introduced into a magnificent hall, adorned with figures of ancient heroes, distinguished by their generosity and valour. The statues of a long race of Spanish worthies were ranged after those of antiquity, and the praises of Spanish beauties were celebrated by Orpheus, who was there preserved in youth and song by the power of enchantment. An elegant entertainment followed, after which Felismena, at the request of the priestess, related a Moorish story, of which the spirit and interest form a remarkable contrast to the languor of the pastoral part of the romance.

Ferdinand of Spain having conquered a considerable district of the kingdom of Grenada, appointed Rodrigo of Narvas to be Alcaide of the Moorish fortresses that had been recently acquired. One night this chief quitted his residence in Alora to inspect the enemy's frontiers. Having arrived at the banks of a stream, he passed with four of the knights who had accompanied him, and left other five at the ford. Those that remained behind soon heard a soft voice from a distance, and, placing themselves in con-



cealment, they perceived, by the light of the moon, a young Moor, superbly mounted, and arrayed in splendid armour, who sung, as he advanced, the most amorous and impassioned verses in the language of Arabia. The Spanish knights attacked him on all sides. Though thus unequally opposed, the stranger had nearly overpowered his assailants, when the sound of the horn, a signal agreed on in case of any emergency, recalled Don Rodrigo, as yet not far distant, to the succour of his friends. He defied the Moor to a single combat, which he readily accepted, but, exhausted by his former encounter, he became the prisoner of the Christian leader. While conducting his captive to Alora, Rodrigo remarked his deep despondency, and begged to be entrusted with the cause of his affliction, which, he added, he could not attribute to any want of firmness to bear his misfortunes. In compliance with this request, the Moor informs his conqueror that he is the last survivor of the family of the Abencerrages, once so powerful and popular in Grenada. All his relatives having fallen under the displeasure of the king, and having been in consequence beheaded, he was sent, while a child, to Cartana, a fortress on the Christian frontier, of which the governor had been a secret friend of his father, and now brought him up as the brother of his daughter Xarifa. The early attachment of these young persons, and their change of behaviour on discovering that they were not related, is described with much truth and tenderness. But the happiness of the lovers was of short duration, as Xarifa was obliged to depart with her father to the government of Coyn, to which he had been appointed by his sovereign. The day before he encountered the Spaniards, the Moor had received a billet from his mistress, informing him that her father had set out for Grenada, and that she awaited her lover in his absence. To this rendezvous accordingly he was on his way, when he had been detained by the attack of the Christians. Having related this story, Don Rodrigo granted the prisoner his freedom for three days, and he immediately set out to visit his mistress. The joy of the interview was complete, till he informed her of his adventures, and his obligation to return to captivity. Xarifa insisted on accompanying him to Alora, and they de-



parted at daybreak. Rodrigo, on their arrival, not only gave them their freedom, but wrote in their favour to the King of Grenada, who, though the request was made by the most formidable of his foes, agreed to pardon this last survivor of the race of the Abencerrages.

On the day which followed the recital of this story, the priestess of Diana, who knew by inspiration all the misfortunes of her guests, and had traced in her mind a plan for their future happiness, conducted them to the interior of the temple, and filled three cups from an enchanted stream. This beverage having been quaffed by Sereno, Sylvanus, and Sylvania, they instantly fell into a profound sleep, in which they remained for a considerable time. Sereno awaked in a state of most perfect indifference for his once much loved Diana, while Sylvanus and Sylvania, forgetting their former attachments, arose deeply enamoured of each other, and employed the most ardent expressions of affection. Some of the most entertaining scenes in Shakspeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* appear to have been suggested by the transference of love occasioned by the potion of the priestess.—See also *Pucelle d'Orleans*, c. 17.

Felismena, meanwhile, received a route from the priestess, and, reassuming her arrows, proceeded according to her itinerary instructions.

During her journey she entered the cottage of a shepherd, whom she discovered to be the lover of Belisa. On seeing him, Felismena conjectured that he had been pierced by an arrow as his mistress related, but that he had not died of the wound, that his father had been in too great a hurry in stabbing himself, and his mistress in running away. In the course of conversation, however, she learned that though he had indeed been the rival of his father, and though it was true that his mistress had promised him a rendezvous, she had never made her appearance. A magician, it seems, by whom she was beloved, foreseeing the nocturnal interview, had raised the phantoms who played the seemingly bloody part related by Belisa, and the lover did not arrive at the appointed place till all had disappeared. After hearing this satisfactory

explanation, Felismena directed him to the temple of Diana, and thus restored him to the arms of the astonished Belisa.

Meanwhile Felismena pursued her journey to the valley of the Mondego. In the vicinity of Coimbra perceiving a knight beset by three enemies, she treated them as she had formerly done the satyrs, and discovered her much loved Don Felix in the person she had preserved. He returned with her to the temple of Diana, and was united to her at the same time that Sylvanus was married to Sylvania, and Belisa to her lover.

The romance concludes while Sereno yet remains in the state of indifference for Diana, into which the beverage of the priestess had thrown him. I have never seen the continuation, by Alonzo Perez, which consists of eight books ; but in that by Gaspar Gil Polo, we are told that Sereno gradually recovered from his insensibility. Delio, the husband of Diana, likewise falls in love with a damsel who had recently arrived on the banks of the Ezla. One day he meets her alone in a wood, and pursues her with a criminal intention, but is so much overheated by the chase that he dies shortly after. No obstacle now remaining to the union of Diana and Sereno, their nuptials are celebrated as soon as the time appropriated for the mourning of the widow has expired.

Gil Polo having thus taken up the romance when the story was on the point of being concluded, has chiefly filled his work with poetry, and stories which are entirely episodical, but which are less complicated, and perhaps more interesting, than those of his predecessor Montemayor.

Cervantes condemns the continuation by Alonzo Perez, but bestows extravagant commendation on that of Gaspar Gil Polo, which he seems to consider as superior even to the original by Montemayor. "And since we began," said the curate, "with the Diana of Montemayor, I am of opinion we ought not to burn it, but only take out that part of it which treats of the magician Felicia and the enchanted water, as also all the longer poems, and let the work escape with its prose, and the honour of being the first of the kind." "Here is another Diana," quoth the bar-

ber, "the second of that name, by Salmantino (of Salamanca); nay, and a third too, by Gil Polo." "Pray," said the curate, "let Salmantino increase the number of criminals in the yard, but as for that by Gil Polo, preserve it as charily as if Apollo himself had written it."

What is chiefly remarkable in the *Diana* of Montemayor, and its continuations, is the multitude of episodes with which they are encumbered, and the inartificial manner in which these are introduced. It has been supposed, indeed, that it was not so much the intention of Montemayor to write an interesting and well connected romance, as to detail, under fictitious names, his own history, and the amours of the grandees of the court of Charles V. "Diversas historias," as he himself expresses it, "de casos que verdaderamente han sucedido, aunque tan disfrazadas debaxo de nombre y estilo pastoral." Under the name of Sylvanus, in particular, he is supposed to have described an early amour of the Duke of Alba, in whose service he spent a great part of his youth. Montemayor himself, we are told, was enamoured of a Spanish lady, whom, in his sonnets, he calls Marfida. After a return from a long journey he found her married, a disappointment which is represented by the union of Diana with Delio. This lady, it is said, lived to a great age in the province of Leon, and was visited there in the beginning of the 17th century, by Philip III. and his court, on their return from Portugal.

The *Galatea* of Cervantes, which was formed on the model of the *Diana*, is also reported to have been written with the intention of covertly relating the anecdotes of the age in which the author flourished, by a representation of the lives, the manners, and occupations of shepherds and shepherdesses, who inhabited the banks of the Tagus and Henares. Thus, under Damon, Cervantes is understood to represent himself, and by Amarillis, the obdurate nymph he courted. This romance, which, with the exception of a few unsuccessful poems, was the earliest work of its author, and was first printed in 1584, is now well known through the imitation of Florian. The adventures are not so extravagant as those of the *Diana*, but the style is greatly inferior, particularly in the poetical parts, which show that the author, as he himself expresses it in

Don Quixote, was more conversant with misfortune than with the muse.\* The episodes, as in its prototype, are interwoven in the most complicated manner. There are the same long discussions on the nature of love as in the *Diana*—equal pedantry, and a greater number of far-fetched conceits; all the heroes of fable and history are quoted, and the sun only shines with the light which he borrows from the eyes of Galatea:—

Ante la luz de unos serenos Ojos  
Que al Sol dan Luz con que da Luz al Suelo.

The work consists of six parts, and though it be not completed, there is enough to bestow on Cervantes the reputation of having written one of the most tiresome as well as one of the most amusing books in the world.

As the *Diana* of Montemayor became the most popular romance which had appeared in Spain since the time of *Amadis de Gaul*, there were many imitations of it, besides the *Galatea* of Cervantes. Among these may be numbered *Los Dies Libros de Fortuna d' Amor*, by Pedro Frasso, printed in 1573, and mentioned in *Don Quixote*; the *Pastor de Iberia*, by Bernardo de la Vega; *Desenganno de Celos*, by Lope de Enciso, 1586, and the *Ninfas de Henarez*, in six books, Alcala, 1587, by Bernardo Gonzales, who, I see, confesses in his prologue, that he had just come from the Canary Islands, and had never seen the banks of the Henarez.

These Spanish compositions resemble in nothing the pastoral of Longus, (which has been regarded as the prototype of this species of romance,) except that the scene is laid in the country, and that the characters are shepherds and shepherdesses. Their authors have not rivalled the beauty and harmony of the rural descriptions of the Grecian, and the simplicity of his characters and sentiments they have not attempted to imitate.

Subsequent writers unfortunately chose for their model the Spanish instead of the Grecian style of pastoral composition.

\* Il ne dit pas ce qu' il pense, mais Je pense ce qu' il dit.

In imitation of Montemayor and Cervantes, whose romances had been so popular in the Peninsula, Honore D'Urfé, a French nobleman, wrote his *ASTREE*, a work, which, under the disguise of pastoral incidents and characters, exhibits the singular history of his own family, and the amours at the court of Henry the Great. The first volume, dedicated to that monarch, appeared in 1610, the second ten years afterwards, and the third, which is addressed to Lewis XIII., was given to the world four or five years subsequent to the publication of the second. The Duke of Savoy was depositary of the fourth part, which remained in manuscript at the death of the author, and was transmitted on that event to Mademoiselle D'Urfé. She confided it to Baro, the secretary of her deceased relative, who published it two years after the death of his master, with a dedication to Mary of Medicis, and made up a fifth part from memoirs and fragments, also placed in his hands. The whole was printed at Rouen, 1647, in five volumes. A modern edition has been published by the Abbé Souchai, in which many things, especially the dialogues, have been much curtailed.

The period of the action of this celebrated work is feigned to be the end of the fifth or beginning of the sixth century, and the scene the banks of the Lignon. Celadon was the most amiable and most enamoured of the shepherds who lived in that happy age and delightful region : \* his passion was returned by the beautiful Astrea, but at

\* This district was afterwards by no means remarkable for its pastoral beauty. In the preamble to *St. Pierre's Arcadia*, which partly consists of a dialogue between the author and Rousseau, the latter replies with a smile, to some observation of the former, ' Now you mention the shepherds of the Lignon, I once made an excursion to Forez, on purpose to see the country of Celadon and Astrea, of which D'Urfé has drawn such charming pictures. Instead of amorous swains, I found on the banks of the Lignon nothing but blacksmiths, forgers, and iron-workers.'

*Author.* 'What, in such a delightful country ?'

*Rousseau.* 'It is full of nothing else but forges. It was this journey to Forez that undeceived me. Previous to that time not a year passed without my reading *Astrea* from beginning to end. I was perfectly familiar with all the characters in that performance. Thus knowledge robs us of our pleasures.'

length the treachery and envy of the shepherd Semire inflame her mind with jealousy. She meets her lover, reproaches him with his perfidy, and then flies from his presence. Celadon casts himself, with arms across, into the river ; but his hopes of submersion, however well founded, are totally frustrated. He is thrown at some distance on the banks of the stream, near a grove of myrtles, where three nymphs come to his assistance, and conduct him to the castle of Issoura.

Astrea, who in concealment had perceived her lover precipitate himself into the stream, but had not foreseen such powerful effects from her reproaches, faints and falls into the water. She is rescued by the neighbouring swains, and conveyed to a cottage. There she is visited by Lycidas, the brother of Celadon, for whom a fruitless search is now made. Astrea pretends he had been drowned in attempting to save her, but her expressions of grief not answering the expectations of the brother, he upbraids her with indifference for the loss of so faithful a lover : Astrea pays a tribute to his virtues, but complains that he was a general lover, and in particular had forsaken her for Amynta. Lycidas now shrewdly conjectures that her jealousy has been the cause of his brother's death, and reminds her that Celadon, at her own desire, had made love to all the neighbouring shepherdesses, in order to conceal his real passion,—an arrangement which Astrea might have previously recollected, without any extraordinary powers of reminiscence. At the desire of Phillis and Diana, two of her companions, she is now induced to recount the progress of her affection for Celadon, and her whole history previous to the water-scene ; a recital in which unfortunately she gives no marks of that defect of memory she had so lately betrayed.

Astrea begins her narrative by describing with much minuteness the sensations, which, though only twelve years of age, she felt on first meeting with Celadon. Soon after this interview the festival of Venus was celebrated. On this occasion it was customary that four virgins should represent the judgment of Paris, in the temple of the goddess. At this exhibition, the description of which is taken from the tenth book of Apuleius, males



were prohibited from being present, on pain of being stoned to death. Celadon, however, obtained admission in disguise of a virgin, and the part of Paris was luckily assigned to him. The three nymphs (one of whom was Astrea), competitors for the prize of beauty, were submitted to his inspection in the *costume* in which their respective excellencies could be most accurately discriminated. Celadon had thus an opportunity of bestowing the prize on Astrea, and afterwards acquainted her with the risk he had encountered for her sake. An incident similar to this occurs in the Pastor Fido, and fifth book of the Rinaldo. In the former, Mirtillo, disguised as his sister, mingles at the festival of Jupiter, among a train of nymphs, who contend which should give the sweetest kiss; Amarillis, the mistress of Mirtillo, is chosen the judge, and receives the caresses of her lover among those of her fair companions. In Rinaldo the incident is similar to that of the romance, except that in the former the audacious intruder is detected by his mistress Olinda—in the latter he reveals the secret himself. A corresponding event, it will be recollected, has been mentioned in the abstract of the Diana of Montemayor.

Spite of this happy commencement, the final union of Celadon and Astrea was retarded by the enmity subsisting between their parents: for the father of Celadon having become acquainted with the passion of his son, sent him to travel in Italy during three years. At his return his affection was unchanged, but Semire having placed Astrea in a situation whence she beheld his apparent courtship of Amynta, her jealousy and treacherous memory gave rise to the sudden catastrophe with which the pastoral commences, and which has been already related.

About this time Astrea derived no slight consolation from the death of her father and mother, as the distress she assumed for their loss served as a cloak for her real grief, on account of the fate of Celadon; “Presque au mesme temps elle perdit Alcé et Hypolite ses pere et mere—Hypolite pour la frayeur qu’ elle eut de la perte d’ Astrée, lorsqu’ ella tomba dans l’eau; et Alcé pour le déplaisir de la perte de sa chere compagne, *qui toutefois ne fut a Astrée un foible soulagement*, pouvant plaindre la

perte de Celadon sous la couverture de celle de son pere et de sa mere.”

While Astrea was thus solaced by the demise of her parents, Celadon resided in the castle of Issoura, in the society of the nymphs by whom he had been succoured. Galatea, the most beautiful of these, and sister to the sovereign of the district, neglected for his sake her two former lovers, one of whom was Polemas, regent of the country in the absence of her brother ; the other Lindamor, formerly her favoured admirer, who was now employed under his sovereign in a war against one of the neighbouring princes.

In spite, however, of this flattering preference, and the undeserved asperity with which he had been treated, the heart of Celadon still remained faithful to Astrea.

But as Galatea, according to the expression of D'Urfé, wished to whip him into affection, he found it necessary to escape from her lash. He was assisted in his elopement by Leonide, a nymph belonging to the court of Galatea, and instantly directed his flight to the banks of the Lignon. As his mistress, however, at parting, had forbidden him her presence, he fixed his residence in a wild cavern in the midst of a forest, and near the side of the stream. Here he resolved to pass the remainder of his days, solacing himself with the hope of beholding Astrea without being seen by her, and by raising a small temple, which, from an allusion to her name, he dedicated to the Goddess of Justice.

One day, while accidentally wandering through a meadow, he saw a number of shepherdesses asleep, and among these he remarked Astrea. Not daring to appear before her, he adopted the expedient of writing a billet, which he left on her bosom ; on awakening she had a glance of her lover as he disappeared, but believed she had seen his spirit, and the letter, in which he informed her that his remains were deposited in the neighbourhood, seemed to confirm the supposition.

The shepherds of Lignon formed a tomb for Celadon, to procure repose to his wandering shade, and shepherdesses gathered flowers, which they strewed on the imaginary grave. Three times the female druids called on his soul :

the high-priest also bade him adieu, and though they supposed he had been drowned, prayed that the earth might rest lightly on him.

Leonide, the nymph who had aided Celadon in his escape from the court of Galatea, although she knew that he was yet alive, assisted at this ceremony. She also frequently visited the recluse in his cavern, and on one occasion brought her uncle, the Grand Druid Adamas, who had become acquainted with Celadon at the castle of Issoura. This druid was much interested in his fate, and, wishing to draw him from solitude, tried to persuade him to disobey the commands of his mistress, and to court instead of avoiding her presence. The fastidious lover being inflexible on this point, Adamas next proposed that he should come to his house in disguise of a girl, and assume the character of his daughter Alexis, who had now resided for eight years with the druids in the caverns of Carnutes. This plan was readily embraced by Celadon, who had scarcely arrived at the mansion of Adamas, when all the neighbouring shepherdesses, and among the rest Astrea, came to pay their respects to the daughter of the Grand Druid. Astrea did not recognise her lover, but was overpowered by a secret and inexplicable emotion. She remained for some time with the false Alexis, and afterwards resided with him at her own abode, in the cottage of Phocion, where she had dwelt since the death of her parents. The account of the friendship of this pretended female and Astrea, their sentimental conversations, and the freedoms in which the former was indulged, form a considerable, but by no means an interesting portion of the romance.

While Celadon and Astrea were thus employed, Polemas, (who, it may be recollected, was the admirer of Galatea,) in order at once to accomplish his projects of ambition and love, raised an army, and besieged in the town of Marcilly the object of his passion, who, by the death of her brother, was now sovereign of the district. Adamas commanded in the city on the part of Galatea; and Polemas, as preparatory to his attack, had secured the person of the false Alexis, whom he believed to be the daughter of Adamas, in order that, by placing her in front of the

assailants, the besieged might not repel the attack. Astrea, on the day in which Alexis was to be seized, had accidentally put on the garb of her companion, and was in consequence conveyed to the camp of Polemas, where she was soon after followed by Celadon. Both were placed in the van of battle. Astrea, when discovered by the besieged, was drawn into town by a pulley, while Celadon, turning on the assailants, greatly contributed to the discomfiture of Polemas. Lindamor afterwards came to the succour of Galatea, and killed Polemas in single combat.

Notwithstanding his late military exploits, Celadon still remained undiscovered by Astrea, and they returned together to the solitary mansion of Adamas. At length, however, the nymph Leonide conducted Astrea to a grove, on pretence that she would there behold the shade of Celadon. After the pretended ghost-raiser had pronounced certain words of invocation, Alexis, who had accompanied them, fell at the feet of his mistress, and confessed the stratagem to which he had resorted. "Go," said the inexorable shepherdess, "and expiate by death the offence you have committed." Celadon begged her to specify what manner of death she wished him to undergo. She refused, however, to make any selection, and expressed a perfect indifference as to the mode of his death, provided it were speedily accomplished.

Being thus left to his own discretion, it occurred to Celadon that the most expeditious means of fulfilling the injunction of his mistress, was to repair to the lions which guarded the fountain of the Truth of Love, the work of the enchanter Merlin. These considerate animals, however, would not devour a person who was of pure heart, and who had never practised dissimulation. Celadon, in spite of his late disguise, was unfortunately regarded by them as being in this predicament, and was thus precluded from enjoying the local advantages to which he might have been otherwise entitled. While in the dilemma occasioned by this unexpected abstinence on the part of the lions, Astrea reached the same spot as her lover. Repenting of her cruelty, she had come to the fountain with intentions similar to those of Celadon, but was much disconcerted to find herself caressed instead of being devoured,

which was the more usual hospitality practised by the lions. Now, by inspecting the fountain, those who were in love saw their own image in the waters by the side of that of their mistress, if she was faithful; but if false, they beheld the figure of a more fortunate rival. Celadon and Astrea, while awaiting some favourable change in the sentiments or appetites of the lions, cast their eyes on the fountain, and each was instantly convinced of the sincerity of the other's attachment. Meanwhile the Grand Druid Adamas approached this singular scene, and addressed a fervent prayer to Cupid. After an alternation of light and darkness—of a storm which ruffled, and a calm which allayed the waters of the fountain, Cupid pronounced with proper effect an oracle, commanding the union of Celadon and Astrea. The lions, who had already evinced symptoms of approaching torpor, became the petrified ornaments of the fountain. Two faithful lovers, inspired with the intention of dying for each other, had now approached its magic waters, which was the destined term prescribed to the enchantment.

The above is the principal story of this celebrated pastoral, and the next in importance comprehends the adventures of Sylvander and Diana. Sylvander, a shepherd, unfriended and unknown, arrives on the banks of the Lignon, and sighs in secret for the beautiful Diana. This nymph was at the same time beloved by Philander, who resided in the neighbourhood in the disguise of a girl, and who perished in a combat with a hideous Moor, while defending the honour of his mistress. Like Celadon, Sylvander repairs to the fountain of the Truth of Love, and is commanded to be sacrificed by the oracle of gentle Cupid. While he is zealously preparing to undergo this operation, he is discovered to be the son of the Grand Druid Adamas, from whom he had been carried off in infancy,—an incident evidently borrowed from the *Pastor Fido*.

It is well known, that in the adventures of Celadon and Astrea, of Sylvander and Diana, the author has interwoven the history of his own family. The allusions, however, the intended application of the incidents, and the characters he means to delineate, have been matters of



great dispute. This ambiguity arises partly from the author often representing one real character under two fictitious names, and at other times distributing the adventures of an individual among a plurality of allegorical personages; he also frequently alters the order of time, and comprehends within a few weeks incidents which occurred in the course of a number of years. We are informed by M. Patru, in a dissertation composed and published at the request of Huet, that while travelling through Italy he had visited M. D'Urfé, who then resided at Turin, and that the author had undertaken to explain to him the mysteries of the *Astrea*, if he would stay with him for some time on his return from the south of Italy. D'Urfé, however, died in the interval, and Patru was therefore only enabled to communicate what he was previously acquainted with, or what he had gleaned during his visit. Huet has farther developed the subject of D'Urfé and his romance, in a letter addressed to M. Scuderi, which is dated 1699, and forms the twelfth of the dissertations published by the Abbé Tilladet; his information was collected from a Marquis D'Urfé, the last, I believe, who enjoyed the title, and Margaret D'Alegre, the widow of Charles Emanuel, nephew of the author of *Astrea*.

From these elucidations, it appears that Honore D'Urfé was of an illustrious family in France, that he was the fifth of six brothers, and was born near the spot where he has placed the scene of his *Astrea*. The barony of Chateamorand, which was in the neighbourhood of his father's possessions, had descended to Diana of Chateamorand. A marriage was projected between this lady and Anne D'Urfé, the eldest of the brothers. During the preparations for the nuptials, Honore D'Urfé became passionately enamoured of the destined bride, which being perceived by his father, he sent him to Malta, that his attachment might be no interruption to the intended union. On returning he found his brother the husband of Diana, a situation he was ill qualified to possess, though he is said to have celebrated the beauty of his spouse in a hundred and forty sonnets. This nominal marriage was dissolved after a duration of ten, or according to others, of twenty-two years. After this separation Diana was united to



Honore, who now espoused her more from interest than love. He soon became disgusted with her, chiefly, it is said, on account of the large dogs by which she was constantly surrounded, and which she entertained at table, and admitted to bed,—a practice in which she dogmatically persisted in spite of the representations of her husband. He forsook her and her canine companions, and retired to Piedmont, where he lived in great favour with the Duke of Savoy, and composed his *Astrea*. Nor is it the least wonderful part of this strange history, that he should have employed his time in celebrating his adoration of a woman whom he had abandoned in disgust. Diana survived him many years. The nephew of the author informed Huet, that when he saw her, one could perceive she had been exquisitely beautiful, but even at an advanced age she idolized her charms, and, in order to preserve their remains, became extremely unsocial, shutting herself up from sun and wind, and only appearing in public under protection of a mask.

It is this family legend that the author is said to have transmitted to posterity in his pastoral romance. *Astrea* and *Diana* both figure *Diana of Chateamora*, while he has exhibited his own character under the names of *Celadon* and *Sylvander*. *Sylvander* is a poor shepherd, because the author was a younger son: he sighs in secret for *Diana*, because he was obliged to conceal his passion on account of the marriage of his brother. *Celadon* throwing himself into the *Lignon*, represents his voyage to *Malta*, and his vows of knighthood. *Galatea* is *Queen Margaret of Valois*, and his detention in the castle of *Issoura*, refers to his having been taken prisoner during the league, by her guards, and conducted to her residence at the castle of *Usson*, where he made himself, it is said, very agreeable to her majesty; a circumstance to which some have attributed the dislike invariably expressed by *Henry IV.* to *D'Urfé*. Under the disguise of *Alexis*, he typifies the friendship *Diana* felt for him as her brother-in-law, and the innocent liberties in which they indulged. *Philander*, attired in the dress of a girl, is the elder *D'Urfé*. A Moor whom he dies combating, is a personification of conscience, which at length compelled him to

relinquish the possession of Diana, if it deserves that name. The deliverance of Sylvander, when on the point of being sacrificed, is his hope of espousing Diana. Adamas is the ecclesiastical power, which dissolved the union of the elder D'Urfé. The fountain of the Truth of Love is marriage, the final test of affection, and the petrified lions, are emblems of the inconveniences of matrimony, overcome by faithful attachment.

Besides the two stories which represent the family adventures of the D'Urfés, there are thirty-three long episodes containing the history of shepherds and shepherdesses, whom the more important characters meet while tending their flocks. Some of these are resident in the vicinity, others have come from a distance by command of an oracle, to consult the druid on their amorous doubts and misfortunes. This frequently introduces, in addition to the story, long discussions on questions of love, which are at length decided by some distinguished and impartial shepherd.

It is well known that in these episodes and disquisitions the author has represented the gallantries and fashionable scandal of the court of Henry IV. Thus, in the story of Daphnide, that shepherdess is the Duchess of Beaufort; Alcidon, the Duke of Bellegarde; Clarinte, the Princess of Conti; Amintor, the Duke of Maine; Alcyre, the Count of Sommerive; Thorismond, Henry III., and Euric, King of the Visigoths, his amorous successor. This information was communicated to Patru by M. de Lamet, a confidant of the Duke of Maine. With this key it is not difficult to comprehend the attachment of Daphnide and Alcidon—the intervening passion of Euric—the ambitious projects of Daphnide—the obstacles presented in the person of Clarinte to her elevation, and the various intrigues and devices by which she attempted to surmount them.

In another episode, Celidée, in order to cure her lover Thamire of his jealousy, disfigured her countenance by tearing it with a pointed diamond, a heroic exertion which increased the attachment of her lover. This alludes to the neglect with which a French prince treated his lady; but, having been imprisoned for state affairs, she followed him into confinement. There she was attacked by the small-

pox, which is the pointed diamond, but though deprived of her charms, her self-devotedness and sufferings at length recalled the alienated affections of her husband.

To such temporary topics and incidents of real life, the *Astrea* was chiefly indebted for its popularity. The remembrance of these having passed away, the work must rest on its intrinsic merits, which it would appear, are not such as to preserve it from oblivion. The criticism made on the romance at the time it was published, was that it contained too much erudition, and that the language and sentiments were too refined for those of shepherds. "*Sylvander*," says a French writer, "*fut le seul qui eut étudié à l'ecole des Massiliens, et Je ne sçais seulement comment ils pouvoient l'entendre, eux qui n'avoient pas fait leurs cours chez les Massiliens.*" *D'Urfé* seems to have anticipated this last objection, as in his fanciful address to the shepherdess *Astrea*, prefixed to the first part of the work, he exculpates himself from this charge on the ground that his characters were not shepherds from necessity, but choice:—"Responds leur ma Bergere! que tu n'es pas, ny celles aussi qui te suivent, de ces Bergeres necessiteuses qui pour gagner leur vie conduisent les troupeaux aux pasturages; mais que vous n'avez toutes pris cette condition que pour vivre plus doucement et sans contrainte: Que si vos conceptions et vos paroles estoient veritablement telles que celles des Bergeres ordinaires, ils auroient aussi peu de plaisir de vous ecouter que vous auriez beaucoup de honte à les redire; et qu'outre cela la pluspart de la troupe est remplie d'Amour, qui dans l'*Aminte* fait bien paroistre qu'il change et le langage et les conceptions quand il dit—

"Queste selve hoggi raggionar d'Amore  
S'udranno in nova guisa, e ben parassi,  
Che la mia Deità sia qui presente  
In se medesima, non ne suoi Ministri.  
Spirerò nobil sensi à rozzi petti;  
Radoleirò delle lor lingue il suono."

A chief defect in the *Astrea*, and what to a modern reader renders it insufferably tiresome, is the long and languishing conversations on wire-drawn topics. The

design, too, which obtained the work a temporary fame, was adverse to its permanent celebrity, as the current of romantic ideas must have been checked by the necessity of squaring the incidents to the occurrences of existing society. The adventures of D'Urfé's own life, which are presented under the disguise of rural incidents, have nothing in common with the innocence of the pastoral character; and the amours at the court of Henry the Great were singularly at variance with the artless loves of shepherds, and fidelity of rustic attachments.

Another fault in the *Astrea*, and one which, with the exception of *Daphnis and Chloe*, is common to all pastoral romances, is the introduction of warlike scenes, in a work which should be devoted to the description of rural felicity. Tasso and other poets have been much, and perhaps justly applauded, for occasionally withdrawing their readers from the bustle of arms to the tranquillity and refreshment of vernal delights; but the author is not equally worthy of praise, who hurries us from pastoral repose to the tumult of heroic achievements.

The work, however, certainly possesses some intrinsic merit, as it was the admiration of many grave and distinguished characters, who would not have been merely enticed by the developement of the fashionable scandal of the day. An extravagant eulogium is pronounced on the *Astrea*, by Camus, Bishop of Beley, in his *Traité de l'Esprit de François de Sales*. Huet used to read the work with his sisters, and he informs us they were frequently forced to lay down the book to give vent to their tears! At one period of his life, Rochefoucault (the author of the *Maxims*), passed his afternoons with Segrais, at the house of Madame La Fayette, where the *Astrea* was the subject of their studies. "Que je regrets que ce sont là des Fables," was the exclamation of a celebrated writer, when he had finished the perusal of the *Astrea*. Huet also mentions that it formed the basis of an epic poem of some reputation. An immense number of tragi-comic and pastoral dramas have likewise been formed from this work: in most of these the prose dialogue has been merely versified, but in others the far-fetched conceits and exaggerated sentiments of D'Urfé have been aggravated. Thus,

in *Les Amours d'Astrée et de Celadon*, the preservation of Celadon, when he threw himself into the Lignon, is thus accounted for :

“ Mais le Dieu de Lignon pour lui trop pitoyable,  
Contre sa volonté le jetta sur le sable,  
De peur que la grandeur de feu de son amour,  
Ne échangeât en guereux son humide séjour.”

I shall conclude the remarks on pastoral romance, by the analysis of the *ARCADIA* of Sir Philip Sidney, a work which was at one time much read and admired, not less perhaps on account of the heroic character and glorious death of its author, than its own intrinsic merit. This romance is sometimes named *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, as being written and dedicated to that “ subject of all verse,” who was the sister of Sidney : “ Your dear self,” says he in his dedication, “ can best witness the manner of its writing, being done in loose sheets of paper, most of it in your presence ; the rest by sheets, sent unto you as fast as they were done.” The work, which was left incomplete, was published after the death of Sidney, and from the mode of its composition, and not having received his last corrections, cannot be supposed to have all the perfection which the author could have bestowed, had the length of his life, according to the expression of Sir W. Temple, been equal to the excellence of his wit and virtues. As it was written in an age when the features of the ancient Gothic romance were not entirely obliterated, it is of a mixed nature, being partly of a heroic description ; and it also contains a considerable portion of what was meant by the author as comic painting. It is in the epic form, beginning in the middle of the action, and, by the usual contrivances, rehearsing, in the course of the work, those events by which its opening had been preceded.

Basilius, King of Arcadia, had, when already well stricken in years, married a young princess, Gynecia, daughter to the King of Cyprus. “ Of these two,” says the narrator, “ are brought to the world two daughters, so beyond measure excellent in all the gifts allotted to reasonable creatures, that we may think that they were born

to show that nature is no step-mother to that sex, how much soever some men (sharp-witted only in evil speaking) have sought to disgrace them. The elder is named Pamela; by many men not deemed inferior to her sister: for my part, when I marked them both, methought there was (if at least such perfections may receive the name of *more*) more sweetness in Philoclea, but more majesty in Pamela: methought love plaid in Philoclea's eyes, and threatened in Pamela's: methought Philoclea's beauty only perswaded, but so perswaded as all hearts must yield, Pamela's beauty used violence, and such violence as no heart could resist. And it seems that such proportion is between their minds: Philoclea so bashful, as though her excellencies had stolen into her before she was aware; so humble that she will put all pride out of countenance; in sum, such proceeding as will stir hope, but teach hope good manners. Pamela, of high thoughts, who avoids not pride with not knowing her excellencies, but by making that one of her excellencies to be void of pride; her mother's wisdom, greatness, nobility, but (if I can guess aright) knit with a more constant temper." (p. 10, ed. London, 1674.)

Basilius, thus in want of something to make him uneasy, determined to visit the temple of Delphos, where the following poetical response was furnished as a subject for his lucubrations:

"Thy elder care shall from thy careful face  
By princely means be stolen, and yet not lost:  
Thy younger shall with nature's bliss embrace  
An uncouth love, which Nature hateth most.  
Both they themselves unto such two shall wed,  
Who at thy bier as at a bar shall plead  
Why Thee (a living man) they had made dead.  
In thine own seat a foreign state shall sit,  
And ere that all these blows thy head do hit,  
Thou with thy wife adultery shall commit."

Basilius, aghast at this puzzling denunciation, and endeavouring to prevent its fulfilment, retired from court to a forest in which he had built two lodges. In one of these he himself and his queen, with their younger daughter Philoclea, resided; while in the other lived Pamela, whom



her father had committed to the guardianship of Dametas, a conceited, doltish clown, whose wife Miso, and daughter Mopsa, are described as perfect witches in temper and appearance. The humours of this family form what is meant as the comic part of the romance.

At this period, Pyrocles, son of Euarchus, King of Macedon, and his cousin Musidorus, Prince of Thessaly, two princes, such as are to be found only in romance, were, after unexampled deeds of prowess, shipwrecked on the coast of Arcadia. The former of these heroes becomes enamoured of Philoclea, and the latter of her sister Pamela. With the usual fondness of the princes of romance for disguise, when their own characters would have better suited their purpose, Musidorus, as a shepherd, named Dorus, becomes the servant of Dametas, who had charge of the Princess Pamela; Pyrocles assumes the garb of an Amazon, with the name of Zelmane, and is thus admitted by Basilius an inmate of his lodge. The situation, however, of Pyrocles (now Zelmane), was less comfortable than might have been supposed; for, on the one hand, he was pestered by the love of Basilius, and on the other by that of Queen Gynecia, who, seeing somewhat farther than her husband, suspected his sex, and would not leave him alone a single moment with Philoclea. The idea of a hero residing in a female garb with his mistress, and for a while unknown to her, which is a common incident in the *Argenis*, and other romances of the period, was perhaps originally derived from the story of Achilles: but that part of the *Arcadia* which relates to the disguise of Pyrocles, and the passion of the king and queen, has been immediately taken from the French translation of the 11th book of *Amadis de Gaul*, where Agesilan of Colchos, while in like disguise, is pursued in a similar manner by the king and queen of Galdap. It may not be improper here to mention the royal recreations, as giving a curious picture of the tenderness of ladies' hearts in the days of Queen Elizabeth. "Sometimes angling to a little river near hand, which, for the moisture it bestowed upon the roots of flourishing trees, was rewarded with their shadow—there would they sit down, and pretty wagers be made between Pamela and Philoclea, which could soonest beguile silly

fishes, while Zelmane protested that the fit prey for them was hearts of princes. She also had an angle in her hand, but the taker was so taken that she had forgotten taking. Basilius, in the mean time, would be the cook himself of what was so caught, and Gynecia sit still, but with no still pensiveness. Now she brought them to see a sealed dove, who the blinder she was the higher she strove. Another time a kite, which having a gut cunningly pulled out of her, and so let fly, caused all the kites in that quarter," &c. &c. p. 58.\*

It would be tedious, and could serve no good purpose, to analyze minutely the different books of the *Arcadia*. Musidorus was long counteracted in his plans by Dametas and his wife, and their ugly daughter Mopsa, to whom he was obliged to feign love, till, having at length discovered his rank to Pamela, he prevails on her to fly with him; but, after having gone a little way, they employ themselves in carving bad sonnets on the bark of trees. Meanwhile the king and queen separately attempt to bring matters to extremity with Zelmane. Teased by their importunities, this ambiguous character gives an assignation to each of them in a certain cave at midnight, and promises there to grant their wishes. As Zelmane had foreseen, Basilius does not recognise the queen amid the obscurity of the cave, and thus accomplishes the last and most mysterious part of the prediction of the Delphic oracle. Being athirst, he unwarily drinks a philtre, which Gynecia had brought with her to the cave, for the purpose of increasing Zelmane's love. This draught gives him the appearance of being poisoned. While their majesties were engaged in this cave adventure, the imaginary Zelmane embraces the opportunity of visiting Philoclea, in his true character of Pyrocles, Prince of Macedon, for the purpose of persuading her to fly with him: but after much discourse on the subject, both faint and fall asleep, so that in the morning the prince is discovered in male attire, in the chamber of Philoclea. Pamela and her lover are equally unsuccessful,

\* Master Stow mentions similar *merry disports*, as forming the court amusements during the Danish ambassador's reception and entertainment at Greenwich, in 1587.

and having lost much time in carving sonnets, they are surprised and brought back by soldiers.

The king still continued apparently in a lifeless state, and Gynecia in despair accuses herself as the cause of his death. The utmost confusion now arises in Arcadia. In this posture of affairs, Euarchus, King of Macedon, accidentally arrives on the coast. Philanax, protector of Arcadia, appoints him umpire in the ensuing trial, and he accordingly sits on the royal throne, thus explaining another Delphic enigma. Gynecia is condemned to be buried alive, along with the body of her husband, whom she confessed having poisoned. The trials of the princes ensue, and long pleadings take place in the viperous style of Sir Edward Coke. Pyrocles is condemned to be thrown from a tower, and his cousin to be beheaded; and these sentences the Macedonian king affirms, though he now discovers that one of the prisoners is his nephew, and the other his son. All are in the uttermost distress, when Basilius, whose corpse was in court, awakes from the effects of the philtre, which had been only a sleep potion; and the oracle being thus fully accomplished, the two young princes are united to their mistresses.

Such is the outline of the story of the Arcadia. The heroic part of the romance consists in a detail of the exploits of Pyrocles and Musidorus, previous to their arrival in Arcadia; and in the description of a war carried on against Basilius, by his nephew Amphialus, whose mother had, at one time, craftily seized and confined the princesses. There are also some happy descriptions of jousts and tournaments. But the work is on the whole extremely tiresome, and its chief interest consists in the stately dignity, and often graceful beauty, of the language. "There is in the revolutions of taste and language," says Bishop Hurd (*Dialogues Moral and Political*, p. 157, ed. 1760), "a certain point which is more favourable to the purpose of poetry (and it may be added, of stately prose,) than any other. It may be difficult to fix this point with exactness. But we shall hardly mistake in supposing it lies somewhere between the rude essays of uncorrected fancy on the one hand, and the refinements of reason and science on the other. And this I take to have been the condition

of our language in the age of Elizabeth. It was pure, strong, and perspicuous, without affectation. At the same time the high figurative manner, which fits a language so peculiarly for the use of the poet, had not yet been controlled by the prosaic genius of philosophy and logic." At the period to which the bishop alludes, the Italians were the objects of imitation, as the French have been since; and, together with the stately majestic step of their productions, the style of Sidney and his contemporaries has a good deal of their turgidity and conceit. I might select a number of beautiful descriptions from the *Arcadia*, as for example, the much-admired passage in Book II., of Musidorus managing a steed. We have already seen the skill of the author in drawing characters; and the following is a striking portrait of an envious man. "A man of the most envious disposition that I think ever infected the air with his breath, whose eyes could not look right upon any happy man, nor ears bear the burden of any body's praise; contrary to the nature of all other plagues, plagued with others' well-being: making happiness the ground of his unhappiness, and good news an argument of his sorrow: in sum, a man whose favour no man could win, but by being miserable," (p. 130.) This character has been imitated and expanded in the 19th number of the *Spectator*. The following description of Pamela sewing is a pretty fair specimen of the kind of conceits scattered through the work. "For the flowers she had wrought carried such life in them, that the cunningest painter might have learned of her needle, which, with so pretty a manner, made his careers to and fro through the cloth, as if the needle itself would have been loth to have gone fromward such a mistress, but that it hoped to return thitherward very quickly again, the cloth looking with many eyes upon her, and lovingly embracing the wounds she gave it: the shears also were at hand to behead the silk that was grown too short. And if at any time she put her mouth to bite it off, it seemed that where she had been long in making a rose with her hands, she would in an instant make roses with her lips; as the lilics seemed to have their whiteness rather of the hand that made them, than of the matter whereof they were made, and that they

grew there by the suns of her eyes, and were refreshed by the most comfortable air which an unawares sigh might bestow upon them."

It has already been mentioned, that what is meant as the comic part of this romance, consists in satire upon Dametas, chiefly on account of his love of agriculture, and the absurdities of his wife and daughter. But it is by no means happy ; nor has the author been more successful in what is designed as pastoral in his romance. A band of shepherds is introduced at the close of each book, as waiting on Basilius, and singing alternately on amorous and rural subjects. There is not probably in any other work in our language a greater portion of execrable poetry, than may be found in the *Arcadia*, and this, perhaps, less owing to want of poetical talent in the author, than to his affectation and constant attempts to versify on an impracticable system. At the period in which he lived, it was thought possible to introduce into English verse all the different measures that had been employed in Greek and Latin, and accordingly we have in the *Arcadia*, Hexameters, or, at least, what were intended by the author as such ; Elegiacs, Sapphics, Anacreontics, Phaleuciacks, Asclepiades, and, in short, every thing but poetry. The effect, indeed, is perfectly abominable.

Another affectation of the times, and to which in particular Sir Philip Sidney was led by his imitation of Sannazzaro, was the adoption of all the various quaint devices which have been introduced into Italian poetry. We have the *Terza rima*, the *Sestina*, *Canzone*, *Sonnets* and *Echos*, the greater part of which, owing to the constraint to which they reduced the author, are almost, and some of them altogether, unintelligible. In the whole *Arcadia* I recollect only two poems which reach mediocrity, and these have at least the merit of being truly in the Italian style. The first is a Sonnet on a Lady Sleeping ; the other is a Madrigal addressed to the Sun.

#### I.

Lock up, fair lids, the treasure of my heart,  
 Preserve those beams this age's only light ;  
 To her sweet sense, sweet Sleep, some ease impart—  
 Her sense too weak to bear her spirits might.



And while, O Sleep! thou closest up her sight,  
 (Her sight where love did forge his fairest dart,)  
 O harbour all her charms in easeful plight!  
 Let no strange dream make her fair body start.  
 But yet, O Dream! if thou wilt not depart  
 In this rare subject from thy common right,  
 But wilt thyself in such a seat delight—  
 Then take my shape, and play a lover's part,  
 Kiss her from me, and say unto her sprite,  
 Till her eyes shine I live in darkest night.

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## II.

Why dost thou haste away,  
 O Titan fair! the giver of the day?  
 Is it to carry news  
 To Western wights, what stars in East appear,  
 Or dost thou think that here  
 Is left a Sun, whose beams thy place may use?  
 Yet stay and well peruse  
 What be her gifts that make her equal Thee;  
 Bend all thy light to see  
 In earthly clothes enclosed a heavenly spark:  
 Thy running course cannot such beauties mark.  
 No, no, thy motions be  
 Hastened from us with bar of shadow dark,  
 Because that Thou, the author of our sight,  
 Disdain'st we see thee stain'd with other's light.

P. 368.

Such are the best productions of an author whom Sir William Temple, in the land that had already given birth to Shakspeare, and Spenser, and Milton, scrupled not to pronounce "the greatest poet and the noblest genius of any that have left writings behind them, and published in ours or any other modern language." (*Miscellanea*, part II.) The *Arcadia* was also much read and admired by Waller and Cowley, and has been obviously imitated in many instances by our early dramatists. The story of Plangus in the *Arcadia*, is the origin of Shirley's *Andromana* or *Merchant's Wife*, and of *Cupid's Revenge*, by Beaumont and Fletcher. That part of the pastoral where Pyrocles agrees to command the Helots, seems to have suggested those scenes of the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, in which Valentine leagues himself with the outlaws. An episode in the second book of the *Arcadia*, where a king



of Paphlagonia, whose eyes had been put out by a bastard son, is described as led by his rightful heir, whom he had cruelly used for the sake of his wicked brother, has furnished Shakspeare with the underplot concerning Gloster and his two sons, in *King Lear*. There are in the romance the same description of a bitter storm, and the same request of the father, that he might be led to the summit of a cliff, which occur in that pathetic tragedy.

The *Arcadia* was also, as we learn from Milton, the companion of the prison hours of Charles I., whom that poet, in his *Iconoclastes*, reproaches with having stolen a prayer of Pamela to insert in his *Ikon Basiliké*. But whether the author of that production actually fell into this inadvertence, or whether his antagonist, who seems to have believed in its authenticity, procured the interpolation of the passage, that he might enjoy an opportunity of reviling his sovereign for impiety, and of taunting him with literary plagiarism, has been the subject of much controversy among the biographers of the English bard. (See Symmons's *Life of Milton*, p. 278, &c.)

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## CHAPTER XII.

Heroic Romance—Polexandre—Cleopatra—Cassandra—Ibrahim—Clelie, &c.

BOILEAU, and several other French writers, have deduced the origin of the heroic from the pastoral romance, especially from the *Astrea* of D'Urfé: and indeed Mad. Scuderi, in her preface to *Ibrahim*, one of her earliest productions, affirms that she had chosen the *Astrea* as her model. To that species of composition may, no doubt, be attributed some of the tamest features of the heroic romance, its insipid dialogues and tedious episodes; but many of the elements of which it is compounded must be sought in anterior and more spirited compositions.

Thus, we find in the heroic romance a great deal of

ancient chivalrous delineation, Dragons, necromancers, giants, and enchanted castles, are indeed banished; but heroism and gallantry are still preserved. These attributes, however, have assumed a different station and importance. In romances of chivalry, love, though a solemn and serious passion, is subordinate to heroic achievement. A knight seems chiefly to have loved his mistress, because he obtained her by some warlike exploit; she formed an excuse for engaging in perilous adventures, and he mourned her loss, as it was attended with that of his dearer idol—honour. In the heroic romance, on the other hand, love seems the ruling passion, and military exploits are chiefly performed for the sake of a mistress: glory is the spring of the one species of composition, and love of the other; but in both, according to the expression of Sir Philip Sidney, the heroes are knights who combat for the love of honour and the honour of love.

Much of the heroic romance has been also derived from the ancient Greek romances. The spirit of these compositions had been kept alive during the middle ages, and had never been altogether extinguished, even by the prevalence and popularity of tales of chivalry. The *Philopopo* of Boccaccio, said to have been composed for the entertainment of Mary, natural daughter of the King of Naples, bears a close resemblance to the Greek romance. This work is taken from a French metrical tale of the 13th century, which has been imitated in almost all the languages of Europe, (Ellis's *Metrical Romances*, vol. iii.) In Boccaccio's version of this story, Florio, Prince of Spain, falls in love with Blancafior, an orphan, educated at his father's court. To prevent the risk of his son forming an unequal alliance, the king sells the object of his attachment to some Asiatic merchants, and hence the romance is occupied with the search made for her by Florio, under the name of *Philopopo*. The work is chiefly of the tenor of the heroic romance, but it presents an example of almost every species of fiction. Heathen divinities appear in disguise, and the rival lover of Blancafior is transformed into a fountain: stories of gallantry are related at the court of Naples, which Florio visits, and the account of

the gardens and seraglio of the Egyptian emir resembles the descriptions in fairy and oriental tales.

Theagenes and Chariclea was translated into French by Amyot, in 1547, and ten editions were printed before the end of the 16th century. The story of Florizel, Clareo, and the Unfortunate Ysea, a close imitation of the Clitophon and Leucippe, written originally in Castilian, was translated into French in 1554, and soon became a popular production.

On the decline of romances of chivalry, it was natural to search for some species of fiction to supply their place with the public. The spiritual and pastoral romances were not sufficiently entertaining nor abundant for this purpose, and the sale of ten editions of the work of Heliodorus was a strong inducement to attempt something original in a similar taste. In pursuance of this new object, the writers of that species of fiction, which may be peculiarly entitled Heroic Romance, resorted in search of characters partly to classical and partly to Moorish heroes.

The adoption of the former may, perhaps, have been owing to Amyot's translation of Plutarch, in which there were many interpolations savouring of the author of "*La vie et faits de Marc Antoine Le Triumvir et de sa mie Cleopatre, translaté de l' historien Plutarque pour tres illustre haute et puissante dame Mad. Française de Fouez dame de Chateaubriand.*"

It was the well-known History of the Dissensions of the Zegriss and Abencerrages that brought the Moorish stories and characters into vogue in France. The Spanish writers attribute this work to a Moor, who retired into Africa after the conquest of Grenada. His grandson, who inherited the MS., gave it, they say, to a Jew; and he in turn, presented it to Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, Count of Baylen, who ordered it to be translated by Genes Peres del Hita. This account, however, is extremely apocryphal. The knowledge, indeed, displayed by the author, concerning the tribes and families of the Moors settled in Grenada before the conquest of that city by the monarchs of Castile, renders it probable that Genes del Hita consulted some Arabian MS. on the subject of the Moorish contentions;

but, on the other hand, the partiality to the Christian cause, which runs through the whole work, proves that the pretended translator was the original author of the greater part of the composition, and that it was first written in the Spanish language.

This production may be regarded as historical in some of the leading political incidents recorded, but the harangues of the heroes, the loves of the Moorish princes, the games and the festivals, are the superstructure of fancy. In these, however, national manners are faithfully preserved, and in the romance of Hita more information is afforded concerning the customs and character of the Moors than by any of the Spanish historians.

The work commences with the early history of Grenada, but we soon come to those events that preceded and accelerated its fall—the competitions of the sovereignty, and dissensions of the factions of the Zegrís and Abencerrages. Of these the former race sprung from the kings of Fez and Morocco; the latter descended from the ancient princes of Yemen. In this work, and all those which treat of the factions of Grenada, the Zegrís are represented as a fierce and turbulent tribe. On the other hand, the Abencerrages, while their equals in valour, are painted as the most amiable of heroes, endowed with graceful manners and elegant accomplishments. The Zegrís, however, remained faithful to the cause of their country, while the Abencerrages, by finally enlisting under the banners of Ferdinand, were the chief instruments of the downfall of Grenada. The Spanish monarch, availing himself of the Moorish dissensions, and of the valour of Don Rodrigo of Arragon, Grand Master of the Order of Calatrava, vigorously attacked Grenada, and finally accomplished its ruin by means of the Abencerrages, who revolted to him in revenge for the unheard-of cruelties exercised on their race by one of their native princes. This work also presents the strange, though not uncommon, spectacle of a nation expiring in the midst of revelry and amusement: the gates of its capital were assaulted by a foreign enemy—the energy of the people was employed, and their valour wasted in internal war, but nothing could interrupt the course of festivity. Every day

brought fresh disaster without, and new bloodshed within; but every vacant hour was devoted to carousals, and to idle and romantic gallantry. In the work of Hita there are also introduced a number of short poetical romances. Each festival and combat furnishes the author with a subject for these compositions; some of which are probably the invention of Hita, while others apparently have been founded on Arabian traditions.

This romance, or history, was first printed at Alcala in 1604, and soon became extremely popular: there was no literal translation till the late one by M. Sané, but a close imitation, published early in the 17th century, is the origin of all those French romances which turn on the gallantries and adventures of the Moors of Grenada, as the *Almahide* of Scuderi, &c.

But though the works above-mentioned may have supplied incidents to the writers of heroic romance, many of the pictures in that, as in every other species of fiction, have been copied from the manners of the age. That devotion, in particular, to the fair sex, which exalted them into objects rather of adoration than of love, and which forms the chief characteristic of the heroic romance, was a consequence of the peculiar state of feeling and sentiment in the age of Louis XIV. Never was prince so much an object of imitation to his people as that monarch; and hence his courtiers affected the same species of gallantry, practised by a sovereign, who paid to beauty a constant and respectful homage, and whose love, if less chivalrous than that of Francis I., or less tender than that of Henry IV., had more *appearance*, at least, of veneration and idolatry. “C’est avec eclat et somptuosité,” says Segur (*Les Femmes*, vol. ii. p. 156,) “qu’ il (Louis XIV.) offre des hommages a la beauté. Forcé d’ aimer il fait une Divinité de l’ objet qu’ il exhause, pour ne pas se rabaisser a ses propres yeux, et eleve la Femme devant laquelle il se prosterne. Nous l’ imitons tous a la ville et a la cour. Aucun roy n’ a donné le ton comme celui-ci, n’ a, comme lui influé sur la conduite, et presque sur les pensées. Notre galanterie a pris la teinte de respect pour le Sexe dont le monarque nous offre l’ exemple.”

We find, accordingly, that whether classical or Moorish



heroes be introduced, the general tone of the heroic romance is nearly the same. But, besides that exalted species of love which no severity could chill, and no distance diminish, for which no sacrifice was too great, and no enterprise too perilous, we always meet with the same interminable length—the same minute descriptions—the same tedious dialogue—the same interruptions to the principal narrative by stories interwoven with it, which perplex and distract the attention. The introduction of long and constantly recurring episodes, a wretched fecundity, which is a proof of real barrenness, is the great fault of the heroic romance.—“Eh mon Dieu,” said a celebrated philosopher, “si vous avez de quoi faire deux Romans, faites en deux, et ne les melez pas pour les gater l’ un l’ autre.”

I shall now, according to my plan, present the reader with a short account of some of the most celebrated of the Romans de longue Haleine, as they have been termed, which may be vulgarly translated *long-winded* romances.

Nearly all of these were written by three authors, Gomberville,\* Calprenede, and Madame Scuderi. The POLEXANDRE of Gomberville, which was first published in 1632, and enjoyed a high reputation in the age of Cardinal Richelieu, was the earliest of the heroic romances, and seems to have been the model of the works of Calprenede and Scuderi. This ponderous work may be regarded as a sort of intermediate production between these later compositions and the ancient fables of chivalry. It has, indeed, a closer affinity to the heroic romance; but many of the exploits of the hero are as extravagant as those of a paladin or knight of the Round Table. In the episode of the Peruvian Inca, there is a formidable giant, and in another part of the work we are introduced to a dragon, which lays waste a whole kingdom. An infinite number of tournaments are also interspersed through the volumes. In some of its features Polexandre bears a striking resemblance to the Greek romance; the disposition of the incidents is similar; as in the Greek romance, the events, in a great measure, arise from adventures with pirates; and

\* See Appendix, No. 5.

the scene is chiefly laid at sea or in small islands, or places on the sea coast.

Polexandre, the hero of this work, was king of the Canary Islands, and reigned over them soon after the discovery of America. In his early youth he had the good fortune to be captured by a piratical vessel fitted out from Britany, and being carried to France, he there received an education superior to what could have been reasonably expected in the seminaries of the Canary Islands.

After an absence of some years, Polexandre set out on his return to his own country. In the course of his voyage he approached the coast of Africa, where he learned that the hardy Abdelmelec, son of the powerful Muley Nazar, emperor of Morocco, had proclaimed a splendid tournament, with a view of procuring a general acknowledgment from all the heroes and sovereigns on earth, that Alcidiana, queen of the Inaccessible Island, was the most beautiful woman in the universe. The African prince, it is true, had never beheld Alcidiana, but he had fallen in love with this incomparable beauty by seeing her portrait. This notion of princes,—for it is a folly peculiar to them,—becoming enamoured of a portrait, the original of which is at the end of the world, or perhaps does not exist, seems to be of oriental origin. Thus, in the *Mille et un jours*, there is the story of a prince, who, after a long search, discovers that the picture he adored was a representation of one of the concubines of Solomon.

The prince of the Canaries proceeds to the tournament, with the intention of contesting the general proposition laid down by Abdelmelec concerning the beauty of his mistress; but the view of the portrait makes such an impression on his heart, that so far from disputing the pre-eminence of Alcidiana, he combats Abdelmelec, in order to make him renounce his passion and his picture.

Having possessed himself of this trophy, Polexandre now returns to the Canary Islands, the declared admirer of Alcidiana. On his arrival there he finds that his sister had been lately carried off by corsairs. The King of Scotland, it is true, was in chase of the ravishers, but Polexandre did not conceive that his own exertions could, on that account, be dispensed with. While engaged in

the pursuit of the pirates, he is driven by a storm into the mouth of a river in an unknown island. On disembarking, he finds that the country is delightful, and its inhabitants apparently civilized. A shepherd offers to conduct him to the nearest habitation: while on their way they observe a stag spring forth from a forest of cedars and palms, with an arrow in its shoulder. Instantly Polexandre hears the sound of a horn, and beholds a chariot drawn by four white horses. This conveyance was open, and was in shape of a throne. It was driven by a beautiful woman, in the garb of a nymph, while another, still more resplendent, and who carried a bow and arrows, occupied the principal seat in this hunting machine. Though Polexandre enjoyed but a transient glance, he discovers, from the resemblance to the portrait, that this is the divine Alcadiana. The passion, of which he had already felt the first emotions, takes full possession of his soul, and he already begins to make ingenious comparisons between his own situation and that of the wounded stag, and mentally reproaches this animal with insensibility in avoiding the transport of being pierced by the arrows of Alcadiana. Polexandre, accordingly, resolves to remain on the island, and to disguise himself as a shepherd, that he might enjoy frequent opportunities of beholding the object of his passion. An old man, with whom he resided, informs him of every thing connected with the history of the queen. Among other topics, he mentions a prediction made soon after her birth, which declared that she was liable to the hazard of being united to a slave, who was to come from the most barbarous nation of Africa, but which, at the same time, promised the greatest prosperity to the kingdom, if she could resolve to accept him for a husband. In order to avoid the risk of this unworthy alliance, the princess remained, for the most part, immured in her palace. Polexandre, however, has occasional opportunities of seeing her, and at length enjoys the good fortune of preserving her life while she was engaged in her favourite amusement of hunting. This procures him admission to the palace, and his access to the presence of the queen is still farther facilitated by his suppressing a rebellion which had broken out in the island.

He gradually insinuates himself into her confidence; and as she had discovered his rank from the rich gifts he bestowed on her attendants, she abates somewhat of that *hauteur*, which it seems was the distinguishing feature in her character. The romance is now occupied with the struggles that arise between this feeling and love, which are fully detailed in a very tiresome chapter, entitled *Histoire des divers sentimens d'Alcidiane*. At length Polexandre leaves the princess, in order to recover one of her favourite attendants who had been carried off by a Portuguese corsair. He soon sails to such a distance as to lose sight of the Island of Alcidiana, which had received from enchantment the unfortunate property, that when once out of view it could never be regained.

The remaining part of the romance is occupied with the adventures of Polexandre in his fruitless attempts to *make* this invisible territory, and in his extirpation of those daring princes who aspired to the love of its queen. For this beauty was beloved by all the monarchs on earth: even those who could not pretend to her in marriage proclaimed themselves her admirers; and knights, though at the extremity of the globe, rigorously abstained from looking on any woman after having viewed the portrait of Alcidiana. One would think even a princess must be somewhat whimsical to take umbrage at such remote courtship, nevertheless Alcidiana had been grievously offended. She had been shocked that the Khan of Tartary, the Prince of Denmark, and the Emperor of Morocco, had paid her the most distant devotion. To adore Alcidiana, though her residence was inaccessible, and her worshippers at the distance of a thousand miles, was a deadly offence for all but Polexandre. This prince, meanwhile, traverses different parts of the globe in quest of the Inaccessible Isle, but his adventures are chiefly laid in Africa, and nearly one half of the romance is occupied with Moorish episodes.

At length Polexandre arrives at a country on the banks of the Niger, the monarch of which was wont to despatch to the temple of the Sun, an annual cargo of persons who were to be ranked among the slaves of that divinity. Polexandre begs leave to accompany this mission in the

disguise of a slave, as he knew that Alcadiana sent thither a yearly offering. By this device he regains the Inaccessible Isle in the vessel that brought the tribute, and which invariably steered the right course by enchantment. On his arrival at the island of his mistress, he finds it overrun by a Spanish army, which had been sent under the Duke Medina Sidonia, for the purpose of subjugating the Canary Islands; but the armada having been driven on the Inaccessible Isle, the land forces had meanwhile attempted its conquest. Polexandre, who is at first unknown, gains some splendid successes over the Spaniards, and a belief is spread through the island that the African slave alluded to in the prediction, and whose alliance with their princess was to be the forerunner of so much prosperity, had at length arrived. The approach of a second Spanish fleet, and the increasing dangers of the kingdom, induce the inhabitants to insist that Alcadiana should fulfil the prophecy. By the importunities of her people, she is at length forced to fix a day for the performance of the nuptial ceremony. Polexandre, to the infinite joy of the princess, discovers himself at the altar, and the same day witnesses the destruction of the Spanish armies, the conflagration of their fleet, and the union of Polexandre with Alcadiana.

The above is an outline of the chief materials of this romance, but the events are arranged in a totally different order from that in which they have been here related. Like the writers of Greek romance, the author,

——— In medias res  
Non secus ac notas auditorem rapit,

which makes a great part of his work more unintelligible than it would otherwise be, from our consequent ignorance of the circumstances and situation of the principal characters, and the allusions contained in their tedious conversations.

A sketch of this romance was first published by the author under the title of *L'Exil de Polexandre*. It was afterwards enlarged to its present bulk of five volumes, each of which contains about twelve hundred pages, and



to every volume an adulatory dedication is prefixed. One of these addresses contains a hint of the author having some political meaning in the romance. There is nothing, however, of this sort apparent, except a general wish to depreciate the character of the Spaniards and the lower orders of society.

Gomberville, the author of *Polexandre*, also commenced the story of *LE JEUNE ALCIDIANE*, the son of *Polexandre* and *Alcidiana*, which was subsequently finished by *Mad. Gomez*. Soon after the birth of this prince, a hermit, who piqued himself on inspiration, revealed that he was destined to slay his father. The romance is occupied with the means adopted to prevent the completion of this prediction.

Gomberville, besides his *Polexandre* and *Le Jeune Alcidiane*, is also the author of two romances, of no great merit or celebrity, entitled *Caritée* and *Cytherée*.

Of the writers of the description with which we are now occupied, *Calprenede*\* is certainly the best. The French critics are divided concerning the superiority of his *Cleopatra* or *Cassandra*, but to one or other the palm of the heroic romance is unquestionably due.

*CLEOPATRA* was first published in parts, of which the earliest appeared in 1646, and when completed, the whole was printed in twelve volumes 8vo. The capacity of the author in extending his work to such unmerciful length need not be wondered at, as it, in fact, comprehends three immense, and, in a great measure, unconnected romances, with about half a dozen minor stories or episodes, which have little relation to the three main histories, or to each other. Indeed the plan of the author is nearly the same as if *Richardson*, instead of forming three novels of his *Pamela*, *Sir Charles Grandison*, and *Clarissa*, had chosen to interweave them in a single work, giving the name of any one of them to the whole composition. That such a scheme has been completely adopted in the romance now before us, will appear from the following sketch.

The shades of night had not yet given place to the first blushes of day, when the disconsolate *Tyridates*, awakened

\* See Appendix, No. 6.

by his cruel inquietude, and unable to await the approaching light, left his solitary mansion to refresh his languishing frame, and breathe his amorous thoughts on the shore of Alexandria.

After some time he perceives a great conflagration on the sea, which he concludes must proceed from a burning vessel, and he is naturally led to compare the flames to those by which he is himself consumed. "Ah, devouring flames!" exclaims he, "ye act your part with less power and cruelty than mine. If ye be not soon quenched, the materials will fail that feed your fury, but the flames find in my soul perpetual fuel; I have no hope of relief from a contrary element, no prospect of the end of such a substance as may ever burn without consuming."

This ardent lover continued his rhapsody till the approach of light, when he saw coming towards land a plank, on which was seated the Queen of Ethiopia, with one of her maids of honour, while her prime minister was swimming behind, and impelling it to shore. Tyridates plunged amid the waves to their assistance, and, bidding the prime minister, who was nearly exhausted, provide for his own security, took his place at the plank, by which means all parties arrived safe on land.

The chief of the two ladies resembled Venus, newly sprung from the womb of Thetis, and would have been mistaken by Tyridates for a sea-goddess, had he not seen the waves use her too rudely to be her subjects. On reaching shore, the first concern of the lady was to faint, and the waiting-woman, who, as Puff says, must always do as her mistress, and who on the present occasion had the same title to a swoon, instantly fell at her feet. When they had recovered, they were conducted, along with Eteocles, the person who attended them, to the solitary mansion of Tyridates, which stood in the immediate vicinity.

After the queen had enjoyed a few hours of repose, she was waited on by her host, whom she entreated to relate the story of his life. Tyridates declared that this would oblige him to disclose what he had resolved to hold secret as long as his breast would contain it, and that even by the acknowledgment of his name, he would incur the

danger of his life. Waving, however, these considerations, he informed her that he was brother to Phraates, King of Parthia. That prince ascended the throne by the murder of his father, and all the rest of his family, with the exception of Tyridates, who escaped to a neighbouring court, and afterwards settled in Judaea, whose king, Herod, was the avowed enemy of Phraates. The story of Mariamne, as it is related by Josephus, is the basis of the adventures of Tyridates. A coolness subsisted on the part of this princess towards her husband, as he had recently put to death her father Alexander, her uncle Antigonus, her two grandfathers, and her brother Aristobulus. Tyridates fell desperately in love with Mariamne, but although she preserved her fidelity to Herod inviolate, Salome, that monarch's sister, in revenge for an ill-requited affection she had conceived for Tyridates, and from hatred to Mariamne, instilled the most fatal suspicions into the mind of her brother. It thus became necessary, both for the safety of Mariamne and his own, that Tyridates should seek refuge in some other country. He had first repaired to Rome, but as the splendour and gaiety of that capital ill accorded with the frame of his mind, he had betaken himself to the solitary dwelling which he now inhabited.

In return for this communication, the attendant of the Queen of Ethiopia commences the history of the life of his mistress, which is one of the three main stories in the work. It relates to her amours with Cæsario, son of Julius Cæsar and Cleopatra, who had been believed dead through the Roman empire, but had, in fact, escaped into Ethiopia after the ruin of Marc Antony.

About this time, Coriolanus, Prince of Mauritania, arrived at the mansion of Tyridates, and his story may be considered as the principal one in the romance, as his mistress, Cleopatra, gives name to the work. This prince was son of the celebrated Juba, and, after the death of his father, was educated at Rome. There he became enamoured of Cleopatra, the daughter of the Queen of Egypt and Marc Antony; but disgusted by the preference which Augustus showed to his rival Tiberius, he one day seized an opportunity of running his competitor through the body on the street, and then fled into Mauritania. He there

raised a revolt among his father's subjects, and having successively defeated the Roman commanders who were sent against him, was invested by the inhabitants with his paternal sovereignty. After his coronation he set out *incognito* for Sicily, where the court of Augustus then was, in order to have a private interview with his mistress; but as she reproached him for perfidy, and avoided his presence, instead of receiving him with the kindness anticipated, he was, in consequence, thrown into a violent fever. Understanding, on his recovery, that Cleopatra had accompanied Augustus and his court to Egypt, he departed for Alexandria, in order to obtain an explanation of her expressions and conduct.

The romance now returns to the Queen of Ethiopia, who, during her residence with Tyridates, was forcibly carried off by pirates, but was afterwards rescued by Cornelius Gallus, the prefect of Egypt, and conducted to Alexandria. In the palace of the prefect she met with Elisa, who was daughter of Phraates, King of Parthia, and, like herself, had been delivered by a Roman vessel from pirates. The story of Elisa, and her lover Artabanus, a young adventurer, who afterwards proves to be the son of the great Pompey, is the third grand narrative of this production. Artabanus is the most warlike and most amorous of all the heroes of romance, and for the sake of Elisa he conquers for her father immense empires in Asia, almost by his individual prowess.

It is impossible to follow the princes and princesses through the various adventures and vicissitudes they encounter; suffice it to say, that at length they are all safely assembled at Alexandria, where Augustus also arrives with his court, and a reconciliation takes place between Coriolanus and Cleopatra. The designs of the emperor to obtain the Princess Elisa for his favourite Agrippa, and Cleopatra for Tiberius, to the prejudice of Artaban and Coriolanus, induce these lovers to excite an insurrection against the Roman power. They storm the castle of Alexandria, but are there besieged by Augustus, and soon reduced to extremity. The emperor, however, terrified by a menacing apparition of Julius Cæsar, which about this time had unexpectedly appeared to him, consents

to pardon the princes, and unites them to the objects of their affections.

This conclusion of the romance is as unsatisfactory as any conclusion of such a work could be. We are vexed that the principal characters should owe their lives and happiness to the bounty of a capricious tyrant, by whom they had been previously persecuted. Had they forced him to agree to terms, or made their escape from his power, the winding up of the whole would have been infinitely more agreeable. The great fault, however, of the romance, is the prodigious number of insulated histories, which prevent the attention or interest from fixing on any one object. Cleopatra is different from all heroic romances in this, that the others have one leading story, and a number of episodes; but in the work with which we have just been engaged, though there is no want of episodes, there are three main stories, which have no intimate connexion with each other, and which claim an equal share of the reader's attention. Indeed, that part of the romance which relates to the adventures of the nominal heroine, is neither the longest nor best managed part of the work. Her lover is a less interesting character than either Artaban or Cæsario: he stabs his rival on the street, excites his father's subjects to revolt, and then abandons them to the mercy of the Romans.

In the innumerable stories of which the romance is compounded, there is, I think, but little variety. Thus in all of them incomparable princes are eternally enamoured of divine princesses, to whom they pay a similar species of adoration, and for whose sake they perform similar exploits. In the character of the heroines there is little discrimination. The only distinction is in the species of personal perfection attributed to each of them; thus the majestic graces of the Ethiopian princess are contrasted with the softer charms of Elisa. The vast number of lovers attached to every one of the heroines fatigues the attention and perplexes the story. Besides inferior slaves, each of the chief female characters has three or four important and passionate admirers. Cleopatra is beloved by Tiberius, Coriolanus, and Artaxus. Candace, the Ethio-



pian queen, by Cæsario, Tyribasus, Callus, and the pirate Zenodorus. Elisa, by Artaban, Tigranes, and Agrippa.

Of this romance the basis is historical, but few of the incidents are consistent with historical truth. Yet they do not revolt the credence of the reader, because they are not in contradiction to known historical facts, and are such as might have occurred without being noticed in the authentic chronicles of the period. We can easily conceive that Cæsario, instead of being murdered, as was intended by his enemies, had escaped into Ethiopia, and that Pompey had a posthumous son, who served in the army of an Asiatic monarch. The revolt in Mauritania, however, and the coronation of Coriolanus by his father's subjects, is an exception to this remark. It is well known that the son of Juba owed his elevation to the favour of Augustus, and hence the event recorded in the romance is instantly rejected as absurd and fictitious.

The speeches and dialogues, though often prolix, frequently rise to eloquence, and paint in admirable language the emotions of dignity and tenderness. The sentiments are not numerous, and are generally far-fetched and exaggerated.

Cleopatra, like most of the other heroic romances of this period, has given rise to several English dramas, as *The Young King*, by Mrs. Behn; *Gloriana, or the Court of Augustus Cæsar*, by Lee; and several others, all which partake of the fustian and forced elevation of the work from which they are derived.

Calprenede, the author of *Cleopatra*, also wrote *CASSANDRA*, a romance which possesses nearly similar beauties and defects with his former production.

In this work we are informed, that on the banks of the river Euphrates, not many miles from Babylon, two strangers alighted from their horses. He who, by the richness of his arms, and the respect the other bore him, appeared to be the master, commences the business of the romance by lying down upon the grass, and burying all disquiets that troubled him in a profound sleep. From this state of forgetfulness he is roused by the clang of arms, occasioned by a combat between two knights. He interposes his good offices by successively attacking the combatants, one of

whom at length makes his escape. The black arms and sable plume of him who remains, witnessed the grief that was in his heart, but our mediator was ignorant of his name and the cause of his discontent, till he declared that he was the unfortunate Lysimachus, and that the person whom he had so recently combated was Perdiccas, the murderer of the fair Statira, widow of Alexander the Great, and of her sister the divine Parisatis. On hearing this intelligence, the person to whom it was communicated instantly fell on his sword, whence Lysimachus conjectured that he took a peculiar interest in the fate of one or other of these beauties. The wound, however, not proving mortal, he is carried to the house of one Polemon, in the neighbourhood, and, while recovering at leisure, his squire agrees to favour Lysimachus with the detail of his master's adventures. His name was Oroondates, and his birth the most illustrious in the world, as he was the only son of the great King of Scythia. A mortal enmity and perpetual warfare subsisted between that sovereign and Darius. In one of these wars, of which the seat was on the Araxis, Prince Oroondates, who was then entering on his military career, made a nightly excursion, with a few chosen friends, into the Persian camp, and having entered a tent, beheld, by the light of a thousand tapers, a troop of ladies, among whom were the Great Queen and Statira, who was daughter of Darius, and the most perfect workmanship of the gods. The prince retired with protestations of respect, but carried away with him a love, which induced him, when the armies retired into winter quarters, to repair in disguise, and under the assumed name of Orontes, to the court of Persepolis, "where she," says the romance, "who had charmed him in a slight field habit, by the light of a few torches in the terrors of night, and apprehensions of captivity, now appeared in broad day, covered with jewels, and seated on a stately throne, all glorious and triumphant." The pretended Orontes was treated with much kindness by the Persian monarch, with the warmest friendship by his son Artaxerxes, but with much severity by the Princess Statira, and with a partiality he did not covet, by her cousin Roxana.

Intelligence now arrived of the Scythian invasion, and

the approach of Alexander to the Granicus. It was resolved in the cabinet of Persepolis, that the latter should be opposed by the king in person, and that Artaxerxes, assisted by experienced commanders, should repel the inroad of the Scythians. Oroondates now revealed his real name and quality to Artaxerxes and the Princess Statira, by whom his suit was now more patiently listened to, and, preferring the interests of his love to those of his country, he resolved to accompany and aid Artaxerxes in the ensuing campaign. In return, Artaxerxes could not do less than spare the Scythians in the ensuing battle; and he, in consequence, repelled an attack so feebly, that he was overpowered, and believed dead by Oroondates, who, having been cured of the ten wounds he had received in this combat, and the Scythians having drawn off their forces, returned to Persia, to serve Darius in his wars against Alexander—contests well fitted to become the subject of romance. The overthrow of the Persian empire is the most magnificent subversion recorded in the annals of history. The monarchy of Alexander had been split into insignificance before it was destroyed, and the Roman power had melted to a shadow before it entirely disappeared; but Darius fell “from his high estate” when the throne of Cyrus shone with undiminished lustre. There is something, too, so august in the Persian name, something so chivalrous in the character of Alexander, and so miraculous in his exploits, that the whole is calculated forcibly to awaken those sentiments of admiration, which it is a chief object of fiction and romance to inspire. We have a splendid description previous to the battle of Issus of the Persian army, of which the *materiel* consisted of the sacred fire, borne on silver altars by three hundred and sixty-five magi, clothed in purple robes—the car of Jupiter and the Horse of the Sun—golden chariots which conveyed the queen and princesses, and the Armamaxe of the royal household. Previous to the battle, Darius addressed his army in an animated harangue; in which he conjured them, by their household gods, by the eternal fire carried on their altars, by the light of the sun and memory of Cyrus, to save the name and nation of the Persians from utter ruin and infamy, and to leave that

glory to their posterity which they had received entire from their ancestors. The romance is now occupied with the events of the campaign, the stratagems resorted to by Oroondates to obtain interviews with Statira after her captivity, and the jealousy excited in her breast, and in that of her lover, by the artifices of Roxana.

After the death of Darius, Oroondates returned to Scythia, where, on account of his treason, he was imprisoned by his father, and the chief administration of affairs entrusted to a stranger, called Arsaces, a young man of unknown birth, but of distinguished wisdom and valour. Arsaces, however, having fallen into disgrace, Oroondates, at the end of two years, was released, and appointed to command an army, which was destined to repel an inroad of the Macedonians. This expedition was eminently successful, and, among the Greek prisoners, Oroondates discovered an eunuch, the confidant of Statira, who removed all his former suspicions as to the fidelity of that princess, but informed him, that while impressed with a conviction of his inconstancy she had accepted the hand of Alexander. On receiving this information, the Scythian prince set out for Susa; where he had an interview and explanation with his mistress. Thence he departed for Babylon, where Alexander then held his court, in order to force him, by single combat, to resign Statira; and on his journey to that city he had met with Lysimachus on the banks of the Euphrates as related in the beginning of this romance.

Lysimachus now commences the recital of his adventures, which, besides his warlike exploits in the service of Alexander, consist of his love for Parisatis, the sister of Statira; his rivalry with Hephestion, who obtained the princess by the interest of Alexander; the renewal of his hopes subsequent to the death of that favourite; and his pursuit of Perdicas, (by whom he imagined the Persian princesses had been destroyed,) till the period when his combat with that traitor had been interrupted by Oroondates.

Thalestris, Queen of the Amazons, being at this time in search of a fugitive lover, whose delicacy had been wounded by her well-known embassy to Alexander, also arrives on the banks of the Euphrates, and prefaces the

narrative of her adventures by a recapitulation of the Amazonian history from the time of the Trojan war.

Berenice, the sister of Oroondates, who had been carried off by Arsacomes, one of her father's courtiers, is rescued by her brother from the power of this forward lover about the same period, and conducted to the royal receptacle on the banks of the Euphrates.

On the first arrival of Oroondates at the house of Polemon, two young women, in simple habits, who were called Cassandra and Euridice, resided in that habitation, but had subsequently disappeared. They were mistaken for common boarders by the princes; and their presence and departure excited no peculiar interest, till the arrival of a confidant of the Persian family, who came to acquaint Oroondates that the former of these ladies was the stately Statira, and the latter the peerless Parisatis. The names of Cassandra and Euridice, which they assumed, were those they had borne while in a private station, but which they had changed when their father mounted the throne of Persia, for the more regal appellations of Statira and Parisatis. These princesses had not, as was believed, fallen victims to the fury of Roxana and Perdiccas, but had been preserved by a stratagem of that general, who was enamoured of Statira, from the rage of Roxana; they had been secreted by him in the house of Polemon, but had afterwards been carried away by his orders, on pretence of a regard to their safety, before they could obtain an opportunity of disclosing their real quality to Oroondates.

For the deliverance of these princesses, preparations are now made by Oroondates, Lysimachus, and their adherents, against the party of Roxana and Perdiccas. In this contest, the chief support of the enemy was Arsaces. At length, however, this commander is severely wounded in single combat with Oroondates, and brought prisoner to the camp, where, during his recovery from his wound, he is discovered to be no other than Artaxerxes, Prince of Persia, who is believed by Oroondates and the rest of the world to have perished in the battle with the Scythians. The adventures of Artaxerxes, which occupy a great part of the romance, have too close a resemblance to those of the principal character. He had only fainted from loss of



blood, and his life had been saved by a noble Scythian. After he had been cured of his wounds, he fell in love with Berenice, Princess of Scythia. On account of the hostility of his family to that of his mistress, he assumed the name of Arsaces, and under this appellation he had performed distinguished services for her country, while his father's empire was subjugated by Alexander. The princess at length being carried off by that lover, from whose violence her brother had rescued her, Arsaces set out in quest of his mistress. In the neighbourhood of Babylon he learned that Berenice was detained in the camp of Lysimachus, and not knowing that her brother (who at this time did not bear the name of Oroondates) was there also, he had naturally enough associated himself to the party of Perdiccas. Now, however, he feels eager to co-operate with dearer friends, who, animated by this assistance, proceed to the assault of Babylon, where they understand that the Persian princesses are confined. In the first attack Oroondates is unfortunately taken prisoner. Perdiccas requires that he should be put to death, in order to aid his suit with Statira. This is opposed by Roxana, who demands, for similar reasons, that Statira should be sacrificed: an internal commotion arises between their partisans, and the besieging army, availing itself of this dissension, bursts into Babylon, discomfits both parties, and rescues the Scythian hero and Persian princess in the very crisis of their fate. Lysimachus is united to Parisatis. Oroondates, accompanied by his divine Statira, departs for Scythia, to the throne of which he had succeeded by the recent demise of his father. The Persian prince, renouncing for ever the name of Artaxerxes, espouses Berenice under that of Arsaces: being subsequently assisted with forces from his brother-in-law, he conquered many provinces, and became that great Arsaces who founded the empire of the Parthians.

Rousseau informs us, in his *Confessions*, that in his boyhood much time was devoted by him to the perusal of heroic romance. He acknowledges that he and his father used to sit up during night poring over the adventures of Oroondates, till warned by the chirping of the swallows at their window of the approach of day. Accordingly, many

incidents of the *Heloise* may be traced in these romances. Thus in the *Cassandra*, with which we have been last engaged, there may be found the origin of that part of the *Heloise*, where *St. Preux*, while his mistress lies ill of the small-pox, glides into the room, and approaches the bed, that he too may partake of the infection and danger. *Julia*, when she recovers, is impressed with a confused idea of having seen him, but whether in a vision or in reality she cannot determine.

*Calprenede*, who wrote *Cassandra*, is also author of the romance of *PHARAMOND*, which turns on the love of that founder of the French monarchy, for the beautiful *Rosemonde*, daughter of the King of the *Cimbrians*, and the cruel necessity to which he saw himself reduced, of defending his dominions from her invasions, and those formidable rivals she had raised up against him, who were enamoured of her beauty, or ambitious of the *Cimbrian* throne.

In this hostility she long, but unwillingly, persevered, on a scruple of conscience, as it had been enjoined her on his deathbed by her father, who was the mortal enemy of *Pharamond*; but she is at length pacified, on its being discovered that that monarch was not, as supposed, the murderer of her brother, a belief which formed the chief cause of enmity.

*Lee's* tragedy of *Theodosius*, or the *Force of Love*, is taken from the romance of *Pharamond*. The story of *Varanes*, which forms the chief plot of that drama, may be found in the third book of the third part.

The whole romance, however, which bears the title of *Pharamond*, is not the work of *Calprenede*: he only wrote the seven first volumes, the remaining five having been added by *Pierre de Vaumoriere*, who was also author of several romances of his own, as *Le Grand Scipion*, which is reckoned the best of his productions.

It is no doubt extraordinary, that such tedious and fantastic compositions as the romances of *Gomberville* and *Calprenede* should have attained the popularity they so long enjoyed; but while readers could be procured, we cannot wonder that authors were willing to persist in this species of writing; for, as *Dr. Johnson* has remarked,

“when a man by practice had gained some fluency of language, he had no farther care than to retire to his closet, let loose his invention, and heat his mind with incredibilities. A book was thus produced without the toil of study, without knowledge of nature, or acquaintance with life.”

The most voluminous writer of heroic romance is Madame Scuderi,\* of whose numerous productions, the earliest is *IBRAHIM, OU L'ILLUSTRE BASSA*, first published in 1635. The hero of this romance was grand vizier to Solyman the Magnificent. In his youth he had been enamoured of the Princess of Monaco, but, overwhelmed with grief by a false report of her infidelity, he had abandoned Genoa, his native country, and having travelled through Germany, embarked on the Baltic Sea to seek an honourable death in the wars of Sweden. This design met with an interruption which no one could have anticipated—he was captured by the Dey of Algiers, who happened to be cruising in the Baltic in person! In recompense, however, of this disaster, his subsequent good fortune was equally improbable; for having been sold as a slave at Constantinople, and condemned to death on account of an attempt to recover his freedom, the daughter of Solyman happened to be at her window to witness the execution, and being struck with the appearance of the prisoner, not only procured his pardon, but introduced him to her father, who, after conversing a long while on painting, mathematics, and music, appointed him Grand Vizier. In this capacity he vanquished the Sophy of Persia, and made prodigious havoc among the rebellious Calenders of Natolia. At length, however, having learned that the rumour concerning the inconstancy of the princess was without foundation, he returned to Italy, and offered the proper apologies to his mistress; but, as he had only a short leave of absence, he again repaired to Constantinople. Thither he is shortly afterwards followed by the princess, of whom Solyman at first sight becomes so deeply enamoured, that soon after her arrival, the alternative is proposed to her of witnessing the execution of Ibrahim, or complying with the desires

\* See Appendix, No. 7.

of the sultan. In this dilemma, the lovers secretly hire a vessel and sail from Constantinople. Their flight, however, is speedily discovered; they are pursued, overtaken, and brought back. The sultan now resolves to inflict both the punishments of which he had formerly left an option: the princess is condemned to the seraglio, and Ibrahim receives a visit from the mutes. Suddenly, however, Solyman recollects having on some occasion sworn that, during his life and reign, Ibrahim should not suffer a violent death. On this point of conscience the Grand Seignior consults the mufti, who being a man *plein d'esprit et de finesse*, as it is said in the romance, suggests, that as sleep is a species of death, the grand vizier might be strangled without scruple during the slumbers of the sultan.

At an early period of the evening, Solyman went to bed with a fixed design of falling asleep, but spite of all his efforts he continued wakeful during the whole night, and, having thus time for reflection, he began to suspect that the mufti's interpretation of his oath was less sound than ingenious. The lovers were accordingly pardoned, and a few days after were shipped off for Genoa, loaded with presents from the emperor.

Nothing can be more ridiculous than the conclusion of this romance, particularly the decision of the mufti, and the somniferous attempts of his master. The sudden revolution, too, in the mind of the latter, by which alone the lovers are saved, is produced by no adequate cause, and is neither natural nor ingenious. The whole romance is loaded with tedious descriptions of the interior of Turkish and Italian palaces, which has given rise to the remark of Boileau, that when one of Mad. Scuderi's characters enters a house, she will not permit him to leave it till she has given an inventory of the furniture. An English tragedy, entitled Ibrahim, or the Illustrious Bassa, is founded on this romance. It was written by Elkanah Settle, and printed in 1677.

No hero of antiquity has been so much disfigured as Cyrus by romance. Ramsay, we have already seen, has painted him as a pedantic politician. The picture represented in the ARTAMENES, OU LE GRAND CYRUS, of Mad. Scuderi, bears still less resemblance to the hero of Hero-

dotus, the sage of Xenophon, or the king announced by the Hebrew prophets. The romance of which the Persian monarch is the principal character, is the second written by Mad. Scuderi, and, like Ibrahim, passed on its first publication under the name of her brother.

Astyages, King of Media, perplexed by the disastrous horoscope of his grandchild Cyrus, ordered him to be exposed on a desert mountain. Being preserved, however, and brought up by a shepherd, he soon distinguished himself among his companions, over whom he exerted a sort of regal authority. By the confession of the shepherd, it was discovered that his foundling is the grandson of Astyages; but the magi being clearly of opinion that the sway he assumed over his companions, was the royal usurpation portended by the planets, Cyrus was sent for to court, and in this portion of the romance, some babyish anecdotes are related in the manner of Xenophon.

The constellations again became malignant, and Cyrus was banished to Persia. From this country he set out on his travels, bearing the assumed name of Artamenes, and under this appellation visited different towns of Greece, particularly Corinth, where he was magnificently entertained by the sage Periander and his mother. On his return to Asia he passed into Cappadocia, over which his uncle Cyaxares, son of Astyages, then reigned in right of his queen. As this monarch, like his father, was understood to have a superstitious terror for Cyrus, the young prince was obliged to appear incognito. It was in a temple of Sinope, the capital of Cappadocia, that he first beheld Mandane, the daughter of Cyaxares, and heroine of the romance, who came with her father and his magi to return thanks for the demise of Cyrus, who had been believed dead since his departure from Persia. Although engaged in this ungracious office, Cyrus became deeply enamoured of the princess, or, as the romance expresses it, was amorously blasted by her divine apparition.

Cyrus was thus induced to offer his services to Cyaxares, in the contest in which he was then engaged with the King of Pontus, who had declared war, because he was refused the Princess Mandane in marriage. A soldier of fortune, called Philidaspes, but who afterwards proves



to be the King of Assyria, also served in the Cappadocian army. He, too, was in love with Mandane, and between this adventurer and Artamenes there was a perpetual rivalry of love and glory.

Meanwhile intelligence arrived from old Astyages, that, in order to preclude all chance of the Persian family ever mounting the throne of Media, he had resolved again to marry, and that on reflection, the only suitable alliance appeared to him to be Thomyris, Queen of Scythia. Artamenes is despatched by Cyaxares on an embassy, to propitiate this northern potentate. On his arrival, the queen unfortunately falls in love with him, which defeats the object of his mission, and he with difficulty escapes from her hands. He finds, on returning to Cappadocia, that his rival, the King of Assyria, had succeeded in carrying off Mandane, and had conveyed her to Babylon. Artamenes is placed at the head of the Cappadocian army, and marches against the capital of Assyria. The town is speedily invested, but when it is on the point of being captured, the king privately escapes, and, taking Mandane along with him, shuts himself up in Sinope. Thither Artamenes marches with his army, but on arriving before its walls, he finds the city a prey to the flames. Artamenes on seeing this, begins to expostulate with his gods, taxing them in pretty round terms with cruelty and injustice. The circumstances were, no doubt, perplexing, but scarcely such as to justify the absurdity and incoherence manifested in his long declamation. At length, however, he derives much consolation by reflecting, that if he rush amid the flames, his ashes will be mingled with those of his adored princess; a commixtion which, considering the extent of the conflagration, was more to be desired than expected. One of his prime counsellors perceiving that he stood in need of advice, now gives it as his opinion, that it would be most expedient to proceed in the very same manner they would do if the town were not on fire. The greater part of the army is accordingly consumed or crushed by the falling houses, but Cyrus himself reaches the tower where he supposed Mandane to be confined. Here he discovers the King of Assyria, but Mandane had been carried off in the confusion by one of the confidants

of that prince. The rivals agree for the present to postpone their difference, and unite to recover Mandane. The subsequent part of the romance is occupied with their pursuit, and their mutual attempts to rescue the princess from her old lover, the King of Pontus, under whose power she had fallen. We have also the history of the jealousy of Mandane, and the letters that pass from the unfortunate Mandane to the unfaithful Cyrus, and from the unhappy Cyrus to the unjust Mandane.

At length Cyrus succeeds in rescuing his mistress from the King of Pontus, and, as the Assyrian monarch was slain in the course of the war, he has no longer a rival to dread: his grandfather and uncle having also laid aside their superstitious terrors, he finally espouses the Princess Mandane at Ecbatana, the capital of Media.

The episodes in this romance are very numerous, and consist of the stories of those princes who are engaged as auxiliaries on the side of Cyrus or the King of Pontus. This is the romance which has been chiefly ridiculed in Boileau's *Les Heros de Roman*. Diogenes addressing Pluto, says, "*Diriez vous pourquoi Cyrus a tant conquis de provinces et ravagé plus de la moitié du monde? C'est que c'étoit un prince ambitieux. Point de tout; c'est qu'il vouloit delivrer sa princesse qui avoit été enlevée—Et savez vous combien elle a été enlevée de fois? Non. Huit fois—voilà une beauté qui a passé par bien des mains.*"

*CLELIE HISTOIRE ROMAINE* is a romance also written by Mail. Scuderi, though it was originally published under the name of her brother. It consists of ten volumes 8vo, of about eight hundred pages each, and was printed at Paris in 1656.

This work enjoyed for some time considerable reputation, but has finally acquired, and perhaps has deserved, the character of being the most tiresome of all the tedious productions of its author. It comprehends fewer incidents than the others, and more detail relating to the heart, and is filled with those far-fetched sentiments so much in fashion in the early age of Lewis XIV.

But what has chiefly excited ridicule in this romance, is the *Carte du pays de Tendre* prefixed: in the map of

this imaginary land, there is laid down the river D'Inclination, on the right bank of which are situated the villages of *Jolis vers*, and *Epitres Galantes*; and on the left those of *Complaisance*, *Petits soins* and *Assiduités*. Farther in the country are the cottages of *Legerté* and *Oubli*, with the lake *Indifference*. By one route we are led to the district of *Desertion* and *Perfidie*, but by sailing down the stream, we arrive at the towns *Tendre sur Estime*, *Tendre sur Inclination*, &c.

The action of this romance is placed in the early ages of Roman history, and the heroine is that Clelia who escaped from the power of Porsenna, by swimming across the Tiber. Aronce, the son of that monaach, is the favoured lover of Clelia, and his rivals are a young Roman, called Horace, King Tarquin, and his son Sextus. A great part of the romance is occupied with an account of the expulsion of the royal house, and the siege of Rome undertaken by the exiled family and their allies. During the continuance of the siege, Clelia resided in a secure place in the vicinity of the town, along with other Roman ladies, whose society was greatly enlivened by the arrival of Anacreon, who was escorting two ladies on their way to consult the oracle of Praeneste: though upwards of sixty years of age, the Greek poet was still gay and agreeable, and entertained the party as much by his *conversation* as his *Jolis vers*. The romance terminates with the conclusion of a separate peace between the Romans and Porsenna, and the union of Clelia with his son Aronce.

It is but a small part of the romance, however, which is occupied with what is meant as the principal subject; the great proportion of these cumbrous volumes is filled with episodes, which are for the most part love-stories, tedious uninteresting, and involved. It is well known, that in the characters introduced in these, Madame Scuderi has attempted to delineate many of her contemporaries. Accordingly Brutus has been represented as a spark, and Lucretia as a coquette. One of the earliest episodes is that of Brutus and Lucretia, who carry on a sentimental intrigue, in the course of which Brutus addresses many love verses to his mistress, among which are the following:

"Quand verrai Je ce que J' adore  
 Eclairer ces aimables lieux ;  
 O doux momens—momens precieux,  
 Ne reviendrez vous point eneore—  
 Helas ! de l' une a l' autre Aurore,  
 A peine ai Je fermé les yeux," &c.

But, if in this masquerade we cannot discover the age of Tarquin, we receive some knowledge concerning the manners and characters of that of Mad. Scuderi. In the fraternity of wise Syracusans she has painted the gentlemen of Port Royal, and particularly under the name of Timanto, has exhibited M. Arnauld d'Andilly, one of the chief ornaments of that learned society. Alcandre is Louis XIV., then only about eighteen years of age, of whom she has drawn a flattering portrait. Scaurus and Liriane, who come to consult the oracle of Præneste, are intended for the celebrated Monsieur, and still more celebrated Madame Scarron. In Damo, the daughter of Pythagoras, who undertook the education of Brutus, she has painted Ninon L'Enclos, who instructed in gallantry the young noblemen who frequented her brilliant society. Finally, she has described herself in the portrait of Arricidie, who delighted more by the beauties of her mind than by the charms of her person. This incongruous plan of taking personages from ancient history, and attributing to them manners and sentiments of modern refinement, especially with regard to the passion of love, is repeatedly censured and ridiculed by Boileau in his *Art Poétique* :—

Gardez done de donner, ainsi que dans Clelie,  
 L'air et l' esprit François a l' antique Italiè ;  
 Et sous des noms Romains faisant notre portrait,  
 Peindre Caton galant et Brutus dameret.

The romance of *ALMAHIDE*, also by Mad. Scuderi, is founded on the dissensions of the Zegris and Abencerrages, and opens with an account of a civil broil between these factions in the streets of Grenada. The contest was beheld from the summit of a tower, by Roderic de Narva, a Spanish general, who had been taken prisoner by the Moors, and Ferdinand de Solis, (a slave of Queen Alma-

hide,) who, at the request of the Christian chief, related to him the history of the court of Grenada.

On the birth of Almahide, the reigning queen, an Arabian astrologer predicted that she would be happy and unfortunate, at once a maid and a married woman, the wife of a king and a slave, and a variety of similar conundrums. In order that she might avoid this inconsistent destiny, her father Morayzel sent her to Algiers, under care of the astrologer, who must have been the person of all others most interested in its fulfilment. After a number of adventures she was wrecked on the coast of Andalusia, and was received in the palace of the Duke of Medina Sidonia, where a reciprocal attachment arose between her and Ponce de Leon, son of that nobleman, and she soon after won the affections of the Marquis de Montemayor, heir of the Duke d'Infantada.

At length the parents of Almahide, learning that she was in the palace of Medina Sidonia, sent to reclaim her, and she was accordingly delivered up to them. Ponce de Leon followed her to Grenada, in the garb of a slave: in that disguise he got himself sold to Morayzel, the father of Almahide, who presented him to that lady. A similar stratagem was adopted by her other Spanish lover, who allowed himself to be taken prisoner in a skirmish with the Moors, commanded by Morayzel, who ordered him to be conducted to Grenada, and presented likewise as an attendant to his daughter.

The dissensions which arose between the two lovers thus placed around the person of their mistress, are restrained by the prudence and temper of Almahide, but each watches in secret an opportunity of supplanting his rival.

Meanwhile Boaudilin, King of Grenada, beheld his empire a prey to the factions of the Zegrís and Abencerrages. As the monarch was of the former tribe, it was judged advisable, in order to heal the dissensions, that he should choose a queen from among the latter. Unfortunately he was so deeply enamoured of Miriam, a woman of low birth, whom it would have been unsuitable to have raised to the regal dignity, that he refused to offend her by espousing another. In these circumstances, Almahide



was requested to impose on the public, by performing for a season the exterior offices of queen. She readily consented to execute a part in this plan ; but she had scarcely entered on the public performance of royalty, when the king fell in love with her pseudo majesty, and unexpectedly proposed that she should not confine herself to the discharge of the ostensible duties of her situation. This important change in the original stipulation was resisted by Almahide, on the ground that her heart was already engaged to another, and the romance terminates with an account of some ineffectual stratagems, on the part of the king, to discover for whose sake Almahide rejected a more ample participation in the cares of royalty.

It will be perceived that the romance is left incomplete, and the part of which an abstract has been given, though published in eight volumes 8vo., can only be regarded as a sort of introductory chapter to the adventures that were intended to follow.

Mathilde d'Aguilar, the last romance of Mad. Scuderi, is also a Spanish story, and is partly founded on the contest between the Christians and Moors.

Of the analogies that subsist between all the departments of Belles Lettres, none are more close than those of romance and the drama. Accordingly, as the Italian tales supplied the materials of our earliest tragedies and comedies, so the French heroic romances chiefly contributed to the formation of what may be considered as the second great school of the English drama, in which a stately ceremonial, and uniform grandeur of feeling and expression, were substituted for those grotesque characters and multifarious passions, which had formerly held possession of the stage. From the French romances were derived the incidents that constitute the plots of those tragedies which appeared in the days of Charles II. and William, and to them may be attributed the prevalence of that false taste, that pomp and unnatural elevation, which characterize the dramatic productions of Dryden and Lee.

It appears very unaccountable that such romances as those of Calprenede and Scuderi, should in foreign countries have been the object of any species of literary imitation ; but in their native soil the popularity of heroic

romances, particularly those of Madame Scuderi, may, I think, be in some measure attributed to the number of living characters that were delineated. All were anxious to know what was said of their acquaintance, and to trace out a real or imaginary resemblance. The court ladies were delighted to behold flattering portraits of their beauty in Ibrahim or Clelia, and perhaps fondly hoped that their charms were consecrated to posterity. Hence the fame of the romance was transitory as the beauty or, at least, as the existence, of the individuals whose persons or characters it portrayed. Mankind are little interested in the eyes or eyebrows of antiquated coquettes, and the works in which these were celebrated, soon appeared in that intrinsic dulness which had received animation from a temporary and adventitious interest. This charm being lost, nothing remained but a love so spiritualized, that it bore no resemblance to a real passion, and manners which referred to an ideal world of the creation of the author. The sentiments, too, of chivalry, which had revived under a more elegant and gallant form during the youth of Louis XIV. had worn out, and their decline was fatal to the works which they called forth and fostered. The fair sex were now no longer the objects of deification, and those days had disappeared, in which the Duke of Rochefoucault could thus proclaim the influence of the charms of his mistress :

Pour meriter son cœur pour plaire a ses beaux yeux,  
J' ai fait guerre a mon roi, Je l' aurois fait aux Dieux.

Besides, the size and prolixity of these compositions had a tendency to make them be neglected, when literary works began to abound of a shorter and more lively nature, and when the ladies had no longer leisure to devote the attention of a year and a half to the history of a fair Ethiopian.

In addition to all this, the heroic romance, when verging to its decline, was attacked by genius almost equal to that by which the tales of chivalry had formerly been laughed out of countenance. Moliere's *Precieuses Ridicules* appeared in 1659, when the heroic romance was too much

in vogue to be easily brought into discredit ; but the satire of Boileau, entitled *Les Heros de Roman, Dialogue*, though written about the same period, was not published till after the death of Madame Scuderi, in 1701, by which time the reputation of her romances was on the wane, and was probably still farther shaken by the ridicule of Boileau. That poet informs us, that in his youth, when these works were in fashion, he had perused them with much admiration, and regarded them as the master-pieces of the language. As his taste, however, improved, he became alive to their absurdities, and composed the dialogue above mentioned, which he declares to be “*Le moins frivole ouvrage qui soit encore sorti de ma plume.*” In this work the scene is laid in the dominions of Pluto, who complains to Minos, that the shades which descend from earth no longer possess common sense, that they all talk *galanterie*, and upbraid Proserpine with having *l’air Bourgeois*. During this conversation, Rhadamanthus announces that all hell is in commotion ; that he had met Prometheus at large with his vulture on his hand, that Tantalus was intoxicated, and that Ixion had just ravished one of the furies. Cyrus, Alexander, and other heroes, are summoned from the Elysian fields to quell the insurrection. They appear accompanied by their mistresses, and the satire on the heroic romances is contained in the extravagance and affectation of their sentiments and language.\*

It seems unnecessary to search farther into the reasons of the decay of heroic romance, of which the temporary favour may to a modern reader appear more unaccountable than the decline. Similar causes contributed to render pastoral romance unpopular ; and, except in the works of Florian, there have been no recent imitations, of any note, of that species of composition. Spiritual fictions, of which the object was to inculcate a taste for the ascetic virtues, came to be regarded as despicable, in consequence of the increasing lights of reason. Political romances had never

\* The fiction of Boileau seems equally absurd as the works which he ridicules : but the classics were now coming into vogue, and a satire, composed after the manner of Lucian, was, of course, regarded as elegant and witty.

formed an extensive class of fiction, nor, in modern times, have there been many imitations of such works as the *Utopia* or *Argenis*.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

#### French Novels—Fairy Tales—Voyages Imaginaires.

THE human mind seems to require some species of fiction for its amusement and relaxation, and we have seen in the above survey, that one species of fable had scarcely disappeared, when it has been succeeded by another. The decline of tales of chivalry produced those various classes of romantic composition with which we have been recently engaged, and the concurrent causes which hastened their decay, were indirectly the origin of those new sorts of fiction, which became prevalent in France towards the close of the 17th, and during the first half of the 18th century.

These, I think, may be reduced into *four* classes. 1. That which is founded on a basis of historical events, as the *Exiles of the Court of Augustus*, and those numerous works concerning the intrigues of the French monarchs, from the first of the Merovingian race to the last of the Bourbons. 2. Novels, such as *Marianne*, *Gil Blas*, *Heloise*, &c. of which the incidents, whether serious or comical, are altogether imaginary. 3. A species of romance of a moral or satirical tendency, where foreigners are feigned to travel through the different states of Europe, and describe the manners of its inhabitants. This class comprehends such works as the *Turkish Spy*, and is partly fictitious and partly real. The journey and characters are the offspring of fancy, but a correct delineation of manners and customs is at least intended. 4. Fairy Tales, to which may be associated the French imitations of the *Oriental Tales* and the *Voyages Imaginaires*.

1. The object of historical novels is to give to moral precept, the powerful stamp of experience and example.

It was supposed that the adventures of well-known heroes, though in some measure fictitious or conjectural, would produce a more powerful impression than the story of an imaginary personage. In most compositions of this description, however, we are either tired with a minute detail of events already well known, or shocked by the manifest violation of historical truth.

The intrigues, both amorous and political, of the court of France, have given rise to the greatest number of the compositions of this description, which appeared during the period on which we are now entering. As far back as the year 1517, a sort of historical romance was formed on the subject of Clotaire and his four queens; but this style of writing does not appear to have been accommodated to the taste of the age, and a long period elapsed before it was imitated. About the middle of the subsequent century, M. de la Tour Hotman published the *Histoire Celtique*, in which, it is said, the principal actions of the French monarchs are shaded, but so faintly and ambiguously, that those who are but moderately conversant in French history, cannot trace any correspondence in the incidents. At length, however, in 1695, appeared the *Intrigues Galantes de la Cour de France*, written originally by M. Sauval, and afterwards improved and enlarged by Vanel, by whom it was published. This work contains a history of the amours of the French sovereigns, from the commencement of the monarchy to the reign of Louis XIV. To a passion, which has, no doubt, especially in France, had considerable effect in state affairs, there is assigned throughout this work a paramount influence. It is represented as alone prompting the Merovingian family to unbounded atrocities, as the motive which stimulated Charles VII. to achieve the freedom of his country, and in future reigns as regulating the decisions of the cabinet, and distribution of the favours of the crown.

Besides this general history, the reign of almost every individual monarch has formed the subject of an amorous romance. We have *Anecdotes de la Cour de France sous le regne de Childeric*, published in 1736, a work falsely attributed to Count Hamilton. The intrigues of the sanguinary and abandoned Fredegonde, the mistress of Childeric, have formed the subject of many romances. Ma-



dame de Lussan wrote the *Anecdotes de la cour de Philippe Auguste* ; *Memoires Sequetes des Intrigues de la cour de Charles VII.* ; *Anecdotes de la cour de François le Premier*, &c. The events of this prince's reign, so well calculated to make a figure in romance, have been the subject of other compositions of a similar description. Mad. Murat, author of the *Fairy Tales*, has written a novel entitled *La Comtesse de Chateaubriant*, who was the mistress of that monarch. *Les Amours de Grand Alcandre*, by the Princess of Conti, details the unremitting gallantries of Henry IV., and has obtained considerable celebrity in France, either from the intrinsic merit of the composition, the interesting character of the hero, or the rank of its author. The works which regard the amours of Lewis XIII., are, as might be expected, chiefly satirical. Those which relate to Lewis XIV., are covered with a thick veil of fiction, which was rendered prudent by the recent nature of the intrigues, and the existence of the persons concerned, or, at least, of their immediate descendants.

Other writers of this period have resorted to more ancient times. *Les Femmes Galantes de l'Antiquité*, by M. Serviez, published in 1726, commences with the multifarious intrigues of the Pagan divinities. Whatever is marvellous in mythology has been retrenched, and its place filled up with amorous incident supplied from the fancy of the author. *Io*, *Semele*, &c. are the characters in the three first volumes ; *Sappho*, and other females, who were content with mortal lovers, are exhibited in those that follow. As in the novels founded on French history, every incident in this work is attributed to love. Indeed, the author declares that it is his object to show, that the wonderful expeditions and incredible revolutions recorded in ancient history, had, in fact, no other spring than the resentment of a despised rival, or the dictates of an imperious mistress.

M. Serviez is also the author of *Les Imperatrices Romaines*, in which he begins with the four wives of Julius Cæsar, and concludes with the nuptials of Constantine. Most of the anecdotes have some foundation in fact, but are amplified with circumstances feigned at the will of the

author, who, if he wished to exhibit the enormities of vice in their greatest variety, and most unlimited extent, which may be presumed from his selection of such a subject, had little occasion to add the embellishments of fiction. This work was first published under the title of *Les Femmes des Douze Césars*, but being afterwards continued, it was printed in 1728, by the name which it now bears.

Of a similar description with this last-mentioned work, is the *Exiles of the Court of Augustus*, by Madame Jardins, afterwards Madame Villedieu. In this romance, Ovid, of course, is a distinguished character. He is joined in his place of banishment by other illustrious Romans, who relate the history of their own misfortunes, and the incidents which had occurred in the capital during his exile.

All the works that have been mentioned are built on history, conjecture, and imagination. Most of them are full of gallantry, but the authors pretend that the cause of morality is aided by the reflections which result. There is little display of sentiment or character. Truth and fiction are unpleasantly blended. Nor are the deviations from the former compensated by the embellishments of the latter, and the reader finds it difficult to pardon the alterations in history, as he is not presented in exchange with incidents of which the decoration palliates the want of reality.

2. Though the celebrated novel, *LA PRINCESSE DE CLEVES*, be in some measure historical, and of consequence partakes, especially in its commencement, of the nature of that class of works with which we have last been engaged, it may justly be esteemed the earliest of those agreeable and purely fictitious productions, whose province it is to bring about natural events by natural means, and which preserve curiosity alive without the help of wonder—in which human life is exhibited in its true state, diversified only by accidents that daily happen in the world, and influenced only by passions which are actually to be found in our intercourse with mankind.

In this point of view, the *Princess of Cleves* forms, as it were, an era in literature. The writers of the *Romans de longue Haleine*, and, indeed, most of the poetical love

writers who were contemporary with them, seem rarely to have consulted, and consequently seldom affected, the heart. Their lovers appear more anxious to invent new conceits, than to gain their mistresses ; and the mistresses, indeed, are such, that quibbles, fustian, or metaphysical jargon, was all they had a right to expect. Madame La Fayette,\* the author of the *Princesse de Cleves*, at length brought the human passions into play. Her heroes and heroines, indeed, are still princes and princesses, and the catastrophe of the piece is perhaps too much in the manner of the old school, but she has produced a work at once dignified and tender, full of interesting portraits and of pleasing incidents.

The scene of events is laid at the court of Henry II. of France, and the time at which they are supposed to occur, is towards the conclusion of the reign of that monarch. The author begins with an account of the different personages of the court, and she delineates their characters, and unfolds their political views, with all the truth of history. Among those who appear in this romance, is Mary Stuart, the unfortunate queen of Scotland, and we are so accustomed to contemplate her in affliction and misery, that we feel a certain sympathy and satisfaction while viewing her in the gaiety and frivolity of youth.

Among the princes and lords at the court of Henry, the most distinguished for gallantry and personal attractions, was the Duke de Nemours. His reputation in these respects was indeed so high, that an ambassador, despatched by Henry to congratulate Queen Elizabeth on her accession to the throne, found her so full of his fame, that the duke is exhorted by Henry to try his fortune with that queen. He accordingly sends a confidant to examine if there were any grounds of hope, and meanwhile goes on a visit to the Duke of Savoy.

During his absence, a young beauty arrived at court, who surpassed all other beauties. She had been educated in a distant province by her mother, Madame de Chartres, a widow lady of the highest rank, of whom she was the only child, and had been inspired with the loftiest senti-

\* See Appendix, No. 8.

ments of purity, dignity, and decorum. On her arrival at court, her beauty, wealth, and rank, collect around her a crowd of the most distinguished aspirers. At length, by the advice of her mother, she fixes on the Prince of Cleves, a young man possessed of many excellent qualities, who, without knowing of her rank and riches, had become enamoured of her charms at an accidental meeting. This prince, in gaining the hand of the fair bride whom he passionately adored, was not completely happy. He knew that she felt no other sentiments towards him than those of the highest respect and esteem, and as there was thus something more than possession, which he did not possess, he enjoyed the privileges of a husband without ceasing to be a lover.

Meanwhile the plan of the Duke of Nemours on the throne of England, seemed only to require his presence for its accomplishment; but, previous to his setting out for that kingdom, he returns to Paris to be present at the marriage of Claude of France. On his entrance into the ball-room, the king orders the Princess of Cleves and the duke, who then met for the first time, to unite in a dance, without any previous introduction or information.

The duke immediately becomes deeply enamoured of the princess, and gives up all thoughts of England, and his former mistresses. He conceals, however, his passion from his most intimate friends; he avows it not even to the princess herself, but at the same time affords innumerable proofs of the greatness of his love and admiration; without offending the most timid delicacy, he makes it evident that there never existed a passion more violent or more capable of making the greatest sacrifices. This is exhibited by details, which form one of the most interesting parts of the romance, and are such as perhaps only a female writer could delineate so well. The Princess of Cleves is involuntarily affected, and the death of her mother, which happened about this time, renders her more helpless. She finds, at length, that she can no longer flatter herself that the duke is an object of indifference to her, and that all she can now do is to avoid him as much as possible, and to live in a state of retirement from the world.

The Prince of Cleves was much at court, was anxious to have his wife there also, and extremely averse to her indulging a fondness for seclusion. But as she was every day exposed to see the Duke of Nemours at court, and even (as he was a friend of her husband) at her own house, she prevails on the prince to allow her to retire to the country. Accordingly she goes to Colomiers, a beautiful seat of the prince, at the distance of a day's journey from Paris. The Duke of Nemours heard that she was there, and as his sister, the Duchess of Mercœur, lived in the neighbourhood, he resolves to pay a visit to his sister, accompanied by the Vidame de Chartres, who was his own most intimate friend, and a near relation of the Princess of Cleves.

One day, while hunting, the duke separates from his attendants, and wandering in the forest, arrives at a pavilion in the vicinity of Colomiers; and having entered it, he sees, while examining its beauties, the Prince and Princess of Cleves coming towards it. From a certain timidity and consciousness, the duke, unwilling to be seen, retires to one of the chambers of the pavilion, while the prince and princess sit down in the portico without, and he is thus placed in a situation in which he could not avoid overhearing their conversation. The prince urges his wife to return to court; tells her that she is more melancholy than usual, and that some great change must have happened, or some important reason exist, to induce her to shun the court. Urged at length in the strongest manner, and thinking that a direct acknowledgment would induce her husband to allow her to escape the perils which threatened her, she makes to him an avowal of her fears. She tells him that she wishes to avoid danger, in order that she might remain worthy of him. The prince is overwhelmed by this confession, for he had hitherto been chiefly consoled in thinking that if he was not passionately beloved, it was because her heart was unsusceptible of passion. "Et qui est il, madame, cet homme heureux qui vous donne cette crainte, depuis quand vous plaist il; qu' a t' il fait pour vous plaire; quel chemin a t' il trouvé pour aller a votre cœur? Je m' estois consolé en quelque sorte de ne l' avoir pas touché par la pensée qu' il estoit incapa-



ble de l' estre : cependant un autre fait ce que Je n' ay pû faire, J' ay tout ensemble la jalousie d' un mari et celle d' amant ; mais il est impossible d'avoir celle d' un mari aprez un procedé comme le votre—mais vous me rendez maheureux par la plus grande marque de fidelité que jamais une femme ait donnée à son mari.”

The prince, however, urges her in vain to reveal the object of her fears. “ Il me semble, repondit elle, en que vous devez estre content de ma sincerité : ne m' en demandez pas davantage, et ne me donnez point lieu de me repentir de ce que Je viens de faire : contentez vous de l' assurance que Je vous donne encore, qu' aucune de mes actions n' a fait paroistre mes sentimens, et que l' on ne m' a jamais rien dit dont J' aye pû m' offencer.”

At length the princess is prevailed on to return to court, and her husband, who is still anxious to discover the object of her attachment and her dread, ascertains, by a stratagem, that it is the Duke de Nemours. A variety of details is then given, all of which admirably contribute to the developement of the story, but which it is impossible to abridge. After the tragical death of Henry, of which, and its political effects, there is an excellent account, the Prince of Cleves and the Duke de Nemours proceed to the consecration of the young king at Rheims. Meanwhile the Princess of Cleves retires to her house at Colomiers. There she is visited by a lady, who, on her return, describes to the queen, in presence of the Prince of Cleves, and Duke de Nemours, the solitary life led by the princess, and the delightful evenings which they had been accustomed to spend in a beautiful pavilion in the forest. The duke, recollecting the place, resolves to go thither, in the hope of having an opportunity of speaking with the princess ; and the prince, who, from some questions which the duke had put to the lady, anticipated his intentions, determines to watch his conduct.

On the following day the duke obtains leave of absence, on pretence of going to Paris, but departs for Colomiers ; and the prince, who had suspicions of this design, sends after him a gentleman, on whom he could rely. This emissary follows the duke to the forest, enters it, and, though now night, sees M. Nemours make his way over

some high palisades into the garden of flowers, where the pavilion stood.—“ Les palissades estoient fort hautes, et il y'en avoit encore derriere, pour empescher qu'on ne pust entrer; en sorte qu'il estoit assez difficile de se faire passage. Monsieur de Nemours en vint à bout meantmoins: si-tost qu'il fut dans ce jardin, il n'eut pas de peine a demeler ou estoit Madame de Cleves; il vid beaucoup de lumieres dans le cabinet, toutes les fenestres en estoient ouvertes, et en s'en glissant le long des palissades, il s'en approcha avec un trouble et une emotion qu'il est aisé de se représenter. Il se rangea derriere une des fenestres, qui servoient de porte pour voir ce que faisoit Madame de Cleves. Il vid qu'elle estoit seule; mais il la vid d'une si admirable beauté, qu'à peine fut-il maistre du transport que luy donna cette veüe. Il faisoit chaud, et elle n'avoit rien sur sa tete et sur sa gorge, que ses cheveux confusement r'attachiez. Elle estoit sur un lit de repos avec une table devant elle, ou il y avoit plusieurs corbeilles pleines de rubans; elle en choisit quelquesuns, et Monsieur de Nemours remarqua que c'estoit des memes couleurs qu'il avoit portées au Tournoy. Il vid qu'elle en faisoit des noeuds a une canne des Indes fort extraordinaire, qu'il avoit donnée a sa soeur, a qui Madame de Cleves l'avoit prise, sans faire semblant de la reconnoistre pour avoir esté a Monsieur de Nemours. Après qu'elle eut achevé son ouvrage avec une grace et une douceur que répandoit sur son visage les sentimens qu'elle avoit dans le coeur, elle prit un flambeau et s'en alla proche d'une grande table, vis-a-vis du tableau du siege de Mets, où estoit le portrait de Monsieur de Nemours; elle s'assit, et se mit à regarder ce portrait avec une attention et une reverie, que la passion seule peut donner.

“ On ne peut exprimer ce que sentit Monsieur de Nemours dans ce moment. Voir au milieu de la nuit, dans le plus beau lieu du monde, une personne qu'il adoroit, la voir sans qu'elle sceust qu'il la voyoit, et la voir tout occupée de choses qui avoient du raport a luy et a la passion qu'elle luy cachoit;—c'est ce qui n'a jamais esté goûté ny imaginé par nul autre amant.”

While the duke advances to contemplate the princess more nearly, his scarf becomes entangled, and Madame

de Cleves, turning at the noise that was occasioned, and half discovering the duke, immediately hastens to her female attendants, who were in an adjoining apartment. The duke hovers round the pavilion during the night, and returns in the morning to the village near the spot where the person employed to watch him was concealed. In the evening he again repairs to the pavilion, followed by the spy of the Prince of Cleves. It is now shut, however, and Madame de Cleves is not there. During the remainder of the night the duke again wanders disconsolate, and only leaves the forest at the approach of day.

He who had followed the Duke of Nemours returns to Rheims, and relates to his master the suspicious circumstances which had occurred. On hearing this intelligence, the Prince of Cleves is immediately seized with a fever. The princess hastens to him, and an affecting conversation takes place. He informs her that her conduct has broken his heart, and though she, in some degree, succeeds in dispelling his suspicions, he soon after expires.

The grief of the princess is inexpressible. Meanwhile the Duke of Nemours in many ways testifies the most timid, and respectful, and violent love. An interview and admirable conversation take place, in which the princess, after confessing her attachment, persists in the resolution of remaining unmarried; in the first place, because she must always consider the duke as in some degree the destroyer of her husband; and, secondly, because his love was so essential to her happiness, that she feared lest by marriage she might put an end to it, and, finally, be tormented by his jealousy or coldness. She retires from court to her estates near the Pyrenees, where she falls into a long sickness. On her recovery she persists in the resolution of never again seeing the duke, or of hearing from him, and spends her time in exercises of devotion and charity.—“Elle passoit une partie de l'année dans cette maison Religieuse, et l'autre chez elle; mais dans une retraite et dans des occupations plus saintes que celles des Convents les plus austeres, et sa vie, qui fut assez courte, laissa des exemples de vertu inimitables.”

It will not perhaps, be possible to find in any other production a more exact delineation of love than in the

romance of which this is the outline. The circumstance of a married woman being the object of it, would render the work exceptionable, were not this, in some degree, necessary to the nature and plan of the composition, and in order to show the triumph of reason and virtue over passion. The purity of heart and dignified conduct of the Princess of Cleves are admirably delineated, and form a striking contrast to the gallantry and laxity in manners of those by whom she is surrounded. Had the author of this work lived at a different period, probably no exceptionable sentiment would have been admitted, but in the age of Lewis XIV., that monarch was considered as a model of perfection, and the faults and vices of his character were rendered fashionable. Some examples of this mode of thinking are exhibited in this work, and in particular a royal mistress seems to be regarded as a respectable and dignified character. For instance, the proud and virtuous Madame de Chartres speaks to her daughter in the following manner of the passion of Henry II. for the Duchess of Valentinois:—"Il est vray que ce n'est ni le merite, ni la fidelité, de Madame de Valentinois, qui a fait naître la passion du Roy, ni qui l'a conservée, et c'est aussi en quoy il n'est pas excusable; car si cette femme avoit eü de a jeunesse et de la beauté jointe à sa naissance; qu'elle eust eu le merite de n'avoir jamais rien aimé; qu'elle eust aimé le Roy avec une fidelité exacte; qu'elle l'eust aimé par raport à sa seule personne, sans interest de grandeur, ni de fortune, et sans se servir de son pouvoir que pour des choses honnestes ou agreables au Roy meme; il faut avoüer qu'on auroit eü de la peine a s'empescher de louer ce Prince du grand attachement qu'il a pour elle." Notwithstanding this laxity with regard to royal gallantry, and which must have had its effect in private life, there is in the whole composition, in the sentiments and language of this romance, a certain chivalrous grandeur, joined to a certain delicacy of feeling and sentiment, which is extremely interesting. The historical details are usually correct, and the episodes are introduced with great art, and never disturb the effect of the main story. In short, this admirable work has all the dignity of the old romance, without its prolixity or ridi-

culous inflation, and unites all the delicacy and minuteness of delineation of the modern novel to a certain feudal stateliness and majesty, such as, in a higher path of literature, appears in the works of Bossuet and Corneille.

Madame La Fayette is also author of *Zayde*, a novel of considerable beauty and interest, and of a description resembling the *Princess of Cleves*, though, unfortunately, partaking somewhat more of the old school of fiction in its incidents and characters.

Gonsalvo, a Spanish grandee, disgusted with the treatment he had received at the court of Leon, the ingratitude of his prince, the treachery of a friend, and the infidelity of a mistress, retires into the wilds of Catalonia. He is accidentally received in the house of Alphonso, a grandee of Navarre, who was in retirement, on account of the misery he had occasioned himself, and those he most tenderly loved, by an extravagant and groundless jealousy. A community of wretchedness cements the friendship of Gonsalvo and Alphonso. They resolve to be unhappy together, and this residence gives the author an opportunity of contrasting the effects and force of the misery which results from the conduct of others, with that which is the consequence of our own.

One day, during his stay with Alphonso, Gonsalvo, while walking near the shore, perceives the wreck of a vessel, and at no great distance a woman lying insensible on the sand. She is conducted to the habitation of Alphonso, and soon after recovers. Between Gonsalvo and this lady, who proves to be *Zayde*, a Moorish princess, and the heroine of the romance, a mutual passion arises. Residing on a desert shore, and ignorant of each other's language, their situation gives an opportunity for a singular painting of the emotions and intelligence of passion, which is infinitely more interesting than the subsequent adventures of the romance.

The story of *Zayde* is somewhat inferior to that of the *Princess of Cleves*, but these two works united may justly be regarded as forming a new era in fiction, and as effecting the most fortunate revolution we have witnessed in the course of our survey. The novels of Madame La Fayette were, according to the expression of Voltaire,



“Les premiers ou l’on vit les mœurs des honnetes gens et des aventures naturelles decrites avec grace. Avant elle on ecrivoit d’un style empoulé des choses peu vraisemblables.” Accordingly, we shall find that henceforth the old romance was completely exploded. Writers of fictitious narratives were now precluded from the machinery of the chivalrous, and the expedients of the heroic romance. They could no longer employ giants or knights to carry a heroine away, or rescue her from captivity. They no longer attempted to please by unnatural or exaggerated representations, but emulated each other in the genuine exhibition of human character, and the manners of real life; and the approximation of their works to this standard came now to be regarded as the criterion of their excellence.

Subsequent to this important revolution in taste, the most celebrated novels which appeared in France are the *Vie de Marianne*, and *Paysan Parvenu* of Marivaux.\* Of these the first has been deservedly the most popular. It is the display of the noble pride of virtue in misfortune, and the succour it at length receives from enlightened beneficence.

A coach, in which Marianne, the heroine of the work, was travelling, when only two or three years of age, with persons afterwards supposed to be her parents, was attacked by robbers, and all the passengers murdered, with the exception of this infant. The child is placed under charge of the curate of a neighbouring village, by whom she is brought up with much care and affection till her sixteenth year. At this period the curate’s sister is called to Paris to attend a dying relative, and takes Marianne along with her, in order to place her in some creditable employment. During her stay in Paris, the curate’s sister unfortunately falls sick, and dies after a short illness. By this time the curate had fallen into a state of imbecility, and his funds had been exhausted by the supplies necessary for his sister. It was, therefore, in vain for Marianne to think of returning to him, and she had no resource left but in the protection of a Religious, to whose care her

\* See Appendix, No. 9.

friend had recommended her while on her deathbed. The priest delivers her up to M. de Climal, in whose benevolence he placed implicit confidence, but who only extended his charity on such occasions for the most infamous purposes. Marianne is accordingly pensioned with Madame Dutour, a woman who kept a linen shop, and, during her residence there, the views of her hypocritical guardian are gradually developed. One day, while returning from mass, she accidentally sprains her foot, and being, in consequence, unable to proceed, she is conveyed to the house of M. Valville, who lived in the vicinity. Between this young gentleman and Marianne a mutual, and rather sudden, passion arises. M. de Climal, who was the uncle of Valville, accidentally comes into the apartment where his nephew was on his knees before Marianne. After her return to her former lodgings, Climal perceives the necessity of pressing his suit more earnestly, and Marianne, of course, rejects it with redoubled indignation. Valville, who had now discovered the place of her residence, enters one day while his uncle was on his knees before Marianne. After this, M. de Climal, despairing to gain the affections of Marianne, withdraws his support. The orphan now addresses herself to the Religious, who had originally recommended her to Climal; but, on visiting him, she finds that hypocrite along with the priest, endeavouring to persuade him that Marianne had ungratefully mistaken, and would probably misrepresent, his motives. Our heroine then applies to the prioress of a convent; and a beneficent lady, called Madame Miran, being fortunately present when she unfolded her story, she is, in consequence, pensioned at the convent at this lady's charge. Soon after, Madame Miran mentions to Marianne that she had recently experienced much distress on account of her son M. Valville having lately refused an advantageous marriage for the sake of a girl who had one day been carried into his house, in consequence of an accident she had suffered on the street. Marianne does not conceal from her benefactress that she is the person beloved by Valville, nor deny that a reciprocal attachment is felt by her, but she, at the same time, promises to use every effort to detach him from all thoughts of such an unequal alli-

ance. The protestations, however, of Valville, that any other union would be the ruin of his happiness, induce his mother to agree to his nuptials with Marianne. It is therefore arranged, for the sake of public opinion, that the circumstances of her infancy should be concealed. These, however, being discovered by the unexpected entrance of Madame Dutour, at the first introduction of Marianne to the relations of Valville, the marriage, in consequence, meets with much opposition from the family of her lover. All such obstacles are at length surmounted, and every thing seems tending to a happy conclusion; but severer trials were yet reserved for Marianne than any she had hitherto experienced. Valville suddenly becomes enamoured of another woman, and the novel terminates in the middle of the story of a nun, who purposes to expiate on her own misfortunes, in order, by the comparison, to console Marianne for the alienation of the affections of her lover.

This story is productive of many very interesting situations, but, at the same time, it is not free from improbabilities. It is never very well explained why Marianne did not return to the curate, and the only reason which suggests itself to the reader, is, that for the sake of adventure it is necessary she should remain at Paris. Though possible, it is not very likely, that Climal should have entered the house of Valville while on his knees before Marianne; that Valville, in turn, should have detected his uncle in the same critical situation; that Marianne should have visited the monk at the moment when Climal was persuading him of her misconceptions; that Madame Dutour should have come to dispose of some goods in the first and momentary visit of ceremony which Marianne paid to the relatives of Valville, and that Valville and his mother should have entered the chamber of the minister, when, at the request of these relatives, he was employing his authority with Marianne to make her renounce all hopes of an union with Valville. Yet it is on these strange contingencies that all the incidents of the novel hinge. It was, I think, indelicate in Madame Miran, and improbable, when the other parts of her character are considered, to force the heroine to harangue her son on the impropriety

of his passion. The attempt to conceal the circumstances of her infancy was hopeless and degrading; nor were those measures resorted to which could have given any chance of imposing on the public. The silence of Mad. Dutour, by whose inadvertence the discovery is principally made, ought at all events to have been in the first place secured.

But the principal defect of the story is, that it has been left unfinished, so that the mind remains disappointed and unsatisfied. Yet had the conclusion been as far inferior to the last half of the novel as that portion is to the first, the indolence of Marivaux has detracted little from his own fame, or the amusement of posterity.

It is chiefly in what I have formerly styled the Ornaments of Romance that Marivaux excels. In portrait painting, indeed, he is unrivalled: he has drawn with inimitable art of distinction the natural goodness of Madame Miran, and the enlightened virtue of her friend Madame Dorsin. The character of Marianne is a mixed one. Vanity seems her ruling passion, but it is of a species so natural and inoffensive that it only excites a smile, and never raises contempt nor disgust, nor a wish for her mortification. The author is never so happy as when he exposes the false pretences of assumed characters, the insolence of wealth, the arrogance of power or grandeur, the devices of mere formal or exterior religion, and the dissimulation of friends. He has also well represented the harshness of benefactors, their still more revolting compassion, and the thin veil of delicacy which they sometimes assume. But of all subjects, he has most happily depicted the stupid curiosity and offensive kindness of the vulgar. He had an opportunity for this species of delineation in the character of Madame Dutour, who pierces the hearts of those she means to console and treat with cordiality. "Est il vrai," says her shop girl to Marianne, "que vous n'avez ni pere ni mere, et que vous n'etes l'enfant a personne? Taisez vous, idiote, lui dit Mad. Dutour qui vit que J'etois fachée; qui est ce qui a jamais dit aux gens qu'ils sont des enfans trouvés? J'aimerois autant qu'on me dit que Je suis batarde." It is well known that Marivaux preferred his character of Climal to the Tartuffe of Moliere; but the

delineations scarcely admit of comparison. The hypocrites in the novel and the comedy, as has been remarked in D'Alembert's *éloge* of Marivaux, are not of the same description. Climal is a courtly hypocrite, and accustomed to polished society : Tartuffe is a coarser and more vulgar character. The dying scene, in which Climal repents and makes atonement to Marianne, is accounted the finest part of the work : he, indeed, utters the true and touching language of contrition, but, it must be confessed, he has too great a command of words for a person expiring of apoplexy.

The sentiments and reflections in this novel are very numerous, and turn for the most part on the secret tricks of vanity, the deceptions of self-love in the most humiliating circumstances, and the sophisms of the passions. Marivaux untwists all the cords of the heart, but he is accused of dilating too much on a single thought, and of presenting it under every possible form. His delineations, too, have more delicacy than strength. "Le sentiment," says D'Alembert, "y est plutot peint en miniature qu' il ne l' est a grands traits ;" and according to the expression of another philosopher, "il connoissoit tous les sentiers du coeur, mais il en ignoroit les grandes routes."

A chief defect of Marivaux lies in his style ; of this fault the English reader cannot be so sensible as his countrymen, but all French critics concur in reprobating the singularity and affectation of his idiom.

Marivaux' Paysan Parvenu resembles his Marianne (to which, however, it is wonderfully inferior) in many of its features. It would be difficult, however, to give any analysis of a work in which there are few incidents, and of which the chief merit consists in delineations of almost imperceptible shades of feeling and character.

The Abbé Prevot,\* who holds the second rank among French novelists, is as much distinguished for imagination, as Marivaux for delicacy and knowledge of the heart. He was the first who carried the terrors of tragedy into romance ; and he has been termed the Crebillon of this species of composition, as he is chiefly anxious to appal the

\* See Appendix, No. 10.



minds of his readers by the most terrifying and dismal representations. Thus, in his earliest production, the *Memoires d' un Homme de Qualité*, printed in 1729, the Marquis de \* \* \* \* having lost a beloved wife, retires to an insulated mansion in Italy, of which the walls and pavement are covered with black cloth, except where the garments of the deceased are suspended. A gold casket, containing her heart, is placed beside him. Here he remains by torch-light for many months, which he spends in gazing on the portrait of the departed object of his affections. From this habitation he launches at once into the gaieties of a Carthusian monastery, whence he is extracted by the Duc de \* \* \*, who persuades him to accompany his son in his travels through the courts of Europe. The story of *Manon Lescaut*, containing the adventures of a kept mistress and a swindler, the most singular and interesting of the novels of Prevot, has usually been appended to the *Memoirs of a Man of Quality*, though it was written long after, and has also been published separately. It is the history of a young man possessed of many brilliant and some estimable qualities, but who, intoxicated by a fatal and almost irresistible attachment, is hurried into the violation of every rule of conduct, and finally prefers the life of a wretched wanderer, with the worthless object of his affections, to all the advantages presented by fortune and nature.

This young man, while at college, elopes with *Manon Lescaut*, the heroine of the novel, and from this disgraceful connexion he is never reclaimed. His mistress, unable to bear the ills of poverty, and seduced by an extravagant vanity, procures her own maintenance, and that of her lover, by the most disgraceful expedients. Yet while betraying, she preserves for him the most ardent affection. He, from corresponding motives of attachment, is induced to cheat at the gaming table, and to aid his mistress in extortion on her admirers ; thus presenting in every situation the contrast of unworthy conduct and exalted sentiment. The author palliates the actions of his hero by painting in the warmest colours the matchless beauty and graces, and delightful gaiety, of *Manon* ; and, by means of the same attributes, throws around her an enchantment,

which never utterly forsakes her in the deepest abyss of vice and misery. An ill-concerted fraud at length gives the friends of her infatuated lover an opportunity of separating him from his mistress. She is sent along with other convicts to New Orleans, but her adorer resolves to accompany her across the Atlantic. In the new world she becomes as admirable for the constancy as she had formerly been for the warmth of her attachment, and the errors of an ardent imagination are represented as extinguished by the virtues of an affectionate heart. She rejects an advantageous alliance, and the companion of her exile having incurred the displeasure of the governor, she follows him to the wilds of America, where she expires, exhausted by grief and fatigue. Her lover returns to France.

It has been objected to the moral tendency of this work, that, spite of her errors and failings, the character of Manon is too captivating; but, in fact, in the early part of her career, she possesses a prodigious selfishness, and a selfishness of all others the most disgusting—the desire of luxury and pleasure, a rage for frequenting the theatre and opera; and it is for the gratification of such passions as these that she betrays and sacrifices her lover. It is only in the wilds of the western world that the aim of the author is developed, which seems to be to show, that there is no mind which a strong attachment may not elevate above itself, and render capable of every virtue. The defects of the novel are no doubt numerous, in point of morals, probability, and good taste, yet some portion of admiration must ever attend the matchless beauty of Manon, and some share of interest follow the exalted passion and self-devotedness of her lover.

A chief defect of the novels of Prevot consists in a perplexed arrangement of the incidents: he has an appearance of advancing at hazard, without having fixed whither he is tending; he heaps one event on another, and frequently loses sight of his most interesting characters. These faults are less apparent in *Manon L'Escaut* than most of his other works, but are very remarkable in his *Dean of Coleraine* (*Doyen de Killerin*) and the *Life of Cleveland*. The former is modestly announced by the

author as "*Histoire ornée de tout ce qui peut rendre une lecture utile et agreable.*" It comprehends the story of a catholic family of Ireland, consisting of three brothers and a sister, who pass over to France after the Revolution, in order to push their fortunes in that country. The dean, who is the eldest, though against this experiment, agrees to accompany his relatives, that they may receive the benefit of his wisdom and counsel, which he, on all occasions, most liberally imparts to them. Accordingly, the novel consists of the numerous adventures, embarrassments, and afflictions which this family encounters in a foreign land, and which chiefly originate in the singular beauty of the sister, the ambition of the second, and the weakness of the youngest brother. The dean, who is a Christian of the most rigorous virtue, is entirely occupied with the present and future welfare of his family. His admonitions, however, are so frequent and tedious, that, as the Abbé Desfontaines has remarked, he is as insufferable to the reader as to his brothers and sister.

Cleveland comprehends the romantic adventures of a natural son of Oliver Cromwell. In his youth he is brought up in solitude by his mother, and is neglected, or rather persecuted, by his father, for whom he early conceives an insurmountable aversion. At length he escapes into France, and his diffidence at his entrance into life, and the rise and progress of his first passion, are happily painted. He follows the object of his affections to the wilds of America, whither she had accompanied her father. There he is united to his mistress, and becomes the chief and benefactor of a tribe of savages, a novel situation, in which he has an opportunity of unfolding all the energies of his mind. An ill-founded jealousy, however, on the part of his wife, over which she brooded in silence for a long course of years, at length leads to new adventures, and to dreadful catastrophes. One of the most curious and interesting parts of the novel, is the episode concerning an almost inaccessible island in the neighbourhood of St. Helena, in which there was established a sort of Utopian colony, consisting of Protestant refugees from Rochelle, who, harassed by a dreadful siege, and panting for a secure asylum, carefully concealed themselves in this retreat from

the rest of the world. This colony is visited by another natural son of Oliver Cromwell, who accidentally meets his brother Cleveland at sea, and relates to him what he had witnessed. On the whole, the adventures in this work are wild and incredible, but the characters are marked, impassioned, and singular.

The novels of Madame Riccoboni, which were chiefly written about the middle of the 18th century, are distinguished by their delicacy and spirit. Of these compositions the style is clear and beautiful, and the reflections, though not so deep-sought as those of Marivaux, are remarkable for their novelty and justness, and the felicity with which they are expressed. Indeed, at every page we meet with happy phrases and sentiments, which we wish to retain and remember. The story of Miss Jenny Salisbury is, I think, the most interesting and pathetic of her productions. It is the exhibition of female virtue in circumstances of the deepest danger and poverty, which seems to be a favourite subject with the French novelists.

Le Marquis de Cressy contains the picture of a man of rank and talents, but of unbounded ambition and worthless heart. He sacrifices the woman whom he loved, and by whom he was in turn adored, for the sake of a more advantageous alliance. She whom he chose as his wife is at last more unhappy than the mistress he had forsaken, and is driven by the indifference and infidelity of her husband, to seek a voluntary oblivion of her misfortunes. The marquis was not so hardened as not to be rendered wretched by the misery he had dealt around him. "*Il fut grand—il fut distingué—il obtint tous les titres, tous les honneurs qu'il avoit désiré : il fut riche—il fut élevé, mais il ne fut point heureux.*"

In the Letters of Lady Catesby, are exhibited the mental struggles of a woman who had been forsaken by a man she adored, but who now sought pardon and reconciliation. Her lover had been solemnly engaged to her in marriage, but, from a scruple of conscience, had chosen another woman. His wife being now dead, he had come to London, and anew solicited the hand of Lady Catesby. She, to avoid his importunities, retired to the country, and in her first letters to her friend, which form by much the best

part of the work, she delineates with admirable spirit the characters of the individuals she met at the castles and manor-houses she visited. The novel, or rather story, of Ernestine, also possesses exquisite grace and beauty. The other compositions of Mad. Riccoboni, Christine de Saube, *Histoire d'Aloise de Livarot*, &c., are, I think, considerably inferior to the productions that have been mentioned.

Rousseau's *Heloise* is generally regarded as the most eloquent and pathetic of French novels; but it seems more deserving of admiration for the passion and feeling displayed in particular passages, than for the excellence of the fable. Events of the highest interest, which occur at the commencement of the work, serve to throw languor over the succeeding pages. The principal actions of the chief characters, on which the romance is founded, are altogether improbable, and not only inconsistent with the sentiments and passions elsewhere ascribed to these individuals, but repugnant to the ordinary feelings of human nature. Of this description are the marriage of Julia with Volmar, while she was yet enamoured of Saint-Preux—the residence of Saint-Preux with the mistress he adored, and the man she had espoused, and the confidence reposed in him by Volmar, while aware of the attachment that had subsisted between him and Julia. The author having placed his characters in this situation, extricates himself from all difficulties by the death of the heroine, who, according to the expression of a French writer, “*Meurt uniquement pour tirer M. Rousseau d’embarras.*”

The pathos and eloquence of Rousseau, the delicacy of Mad. Riccoboni, the gloomy, but forcible paintings of Prevot, and the knowledge of human nature displayed in the works of Marivaux, have raised the French to the highest reputation for the composition of novels of the serious class. In many of these, however, though admirable in point of talent, there is too often a contest of duties, in which those are adhered to which should be subordinate, and those abandoned which ought to be paramount to all others. Thus, they sometimes entice us to find, in the subtlety of feeling, a pardon for our neglect of the more homely and downright duties, and lead us to nourish the blossoms of virtue more than the root or branches.



It was naturally to be expected, that while the more serious class of fictitious compositions was thus successfully cultivated, the more gay and lively productions of a similar description should not have been neglected. *La Gaieté Francoise* had become proverbial among all the nations of Europe, and, as the fictions of a people are invariably expressive in some degree of its character, corresponding compositions naturally arose. Of these, the most distinguished are the works of Le Sage, whose *Gil Blas* is too well known to require here any detail of those incidents, in which all conditions of life are represented with such fidelity and animation. The originality, however, of this entertaining novel has been much questioned, in consequence of its resemblance to the Spanish romance *Marcos de Obregon*, of which an account has already been given (see above, vol. ii. p. 214, &c.) Many of the stories in *Gil Blas* are also derived from the plots of Spanish comedies; but they have in turn suggested the scenes of many of our English dramas: Cibber's comedy *She Would and She Would Not*, is taken from the story of *Aurora*, and Thomson's *Tancred and Sigismunda* is from the *Mariage de Vengeance*.

The leading idea of the *Diable Boiteux* is also borrowed from the Spanish, as the author indeed has acknowledged in his dedication. Part of the fiction, however, appears to have been originally drawn from the cabalistic work, entitled *Vinculum Spirituum*. The Asiatics believed that, by abstinence and particular prayers, evil spirits could be reduced to obedience and confined in phials. Accordingly, in the *Vinculum Spirituum*, which was derived from the East, it is said that Solomon discovered, by means of a certain learned book, the valuable secret of inclosing in a bottle of black glass, three millions of infernal spirits, with seventy-two of their kings, of whom Beleth was the chief, Beliar the second, and *Asmodeus* the third. Solomon afterwards cast this bottle into a great well near Babylon. Fortunately for the contents, the Babylonians, hoping to find a treasure in this well, descended into it, and broke the bottle, on which the emancipated demons returned to their ordinary element. The notion of the confinement of *Asmodeus* in the glass bottle, has been adopted in the

Spanish work, entitled *El Diablo Cojuelo*, written by Luis Velez de Guevara, and first printed in 1641. In that production, the student Don Cleofas having accidentally entered the abode of an astrologer, delivers from a glass bottle, in which he had been confined by the conjuror, the devil, called the *Diablo Cojuelo*, who is a spirit nearly of the same description as the *Asmodée* of *Le Sage*, and who, in return for the service he had received from the scholar, exhibits to him the interior of the houses of Madrid. Many of *Le Sage's* portraits are also copied from the work of Guevara; as, for instance, that of Donna Fabula and her husband Don Torribio—of the alchemist employed in search of the philosopher's stone, and the hypocrite preparing to attend an assemblage of sorcerers, which was to be held between St. Sebastian and Fontarabia. As in *Le Sage*, the *Diablo Cojuelo* unroofs one of the mad-houses (*casa de los locos*); but towards the conclusion of the work, he carries Don Cleofas beyond Madrid—he shows him the academies and convents in the vicinity, and transports him through the air to the provincial towns of Spain and the country-seats of its grandees. Some of the situations in the *Diable Boiteux* have also been borrowed from the *Dia y noche de Madrid*, by F. Santos. The story of Count Belflor has, in turn, evidently suggested the plot of Beaumarchais' drama, entitled *Eugenio*.

The Bachelor of Salamanca, also written by *Le Sage*, possesses much of the same style of humour which characterizes *Gil Blas* and the *Diable Boiteux*, though it is greatly inferior to either of these compositions. In this work, Don Cherubim, the Bachelor of Salamanca, is placed in all different situations of life—a plan which gives scope to the author for satire, as various as the classes of men with whom his hero at different times associates. The first part, in which he appears as a tutor, is by much the most novel and entertaining. *Le Sage* has there admirably painted the capricious and headstrong humours of children—the absurd indulgence of parents—the hardships, slavery, and indelicacy of treatment, so often experienced by a class of men to whom the obligations due have been in all countries too slightly appreciated.

“Si enim genitoribus corporum nostrorum omnia, quid non ingeniorum parentibus ac formatoribus debeamus? Quanto enim melius de nobis meriti sunt, qui animum nostrum excoluere, quam qui corpus.”—(*Petrarc. lit.*)

Le Sage is also the reputed author of *Estevanille Gonzales ou le Garçon de Bonne humeur*. The plan of this romance, and some of the incidents (although fewer than might be supposed from the correspondence of the titles), have been suggested by the Spanish work, *Vida y hechos de Estevanillo Gonzalez hombre de buen humor compuesto por el mesmo*, which was first printed at Brussels in 1640.

During the minority of Louis XV., and the regency of that Duke of Orleans who published the splendid edition of the Pastoral of Longus, the court of France assumed an appearance of gay and open profligacy, resembling that which half a century before had prevailed in England, in the days of Charles, and forming a striking contrast to the austere and sombre manners which characterized the latter years of the reign of Louis XIV. About that period, when libertinism had become fashionable from the sanction of the highest names in the state, Crébillon, the son of the celebrated tragic poet of that name, became the founder of a new species of comic novel. His works enjoyed at one time a high but not a long-continued, nor deserved reputation. They chiefly owed their popularity to satire and personal allusions, and the elegant garb in which pictures of debauchery were attired. A great part of his *Ecumoir*, or *Tanzai et Neadara*, feigned to be translated from the Japanese language, was written to ridicule the disturbances occasioned by the disputes of the Jansenists and Molinists, and it also contains the allegorical history of the Bull *Unigenitus*, the subject of so much discussion and controversy during the regency of the Duke of Orleans. In its more obvious meaning, it is the story of an Eastern prince and princess, to whose mutual love and happiness continual obstacles are presented by the malevolence of fairies. The romance is occupied with the means by which these impediments are attempted to be removed, and of which the chief is the implement that gives title to the romance. In the episode of a mole, who had once been a fairy called Moustache, and who relates her own story, the author

has ridiculed the affected style and endless reflections of Marivaux.

In the *Sopha*, a spirit is confined by Brama to that article of furniture, which gives name to the work. He is allowed to change the *Sopha* of residence, but is doomed to remain in a habitation of this nature, till emancipated by a rare concurrence.

Ah *Quel Conte!* is the story of an Eastern monarch, who was beloved by a fairy, the protectress of his dominions. In revenge for the neglect with which he treated her, she inspired him with a passion for a goose, whom he had met at a brilliant ball, attended by all the birds, of which there is a long description, and which, I suppose, is the origin of such productions as the *Elephant's Ball*, the *Peacock at Home*, &c. Most of the birds prove to have been princes, princesses, or fairies, and the greater part of the romance is occupied with the adventures which led to their metamorphosis, in which there is no doubt a concealed meaning and satire, but which, to most readers of this country, must appear a mass of unintelligible extravagance.

In *Les Egarements du Coeur et de l'Esprit*, the adventures of more than one individual of rank at the French court of that day are said to be depicted. This work comprehends the detail of a young man's first entrance into life, his inexperience and seduction, and the consequent remorse which holds out the prospect of his return to the paths of virtue. The plan of the author has been confined to the effects of love, or something resembling it, and the influence of the other passions has not been displayed.

Crebillon was imitated by M. Bastide, afterwards the conductor of the *Bibliothèque des Romans*; and also by Dorat, in his *Malheurs d'Inconstance* and in *Les Sacrifices de l'Amour*. The style of composition, however, introduced by Crebillon, was only popular for a moment, and fell into disrepute, when the manners of the French court became, if not more pure, at least less openly licentious.

An author who had already exhausted all the sources of tragic pathos and sympathy, also opened all the floods of satire and ridicule on the superstitions and despotism of his country. In most of the romances of Voltaire, there is a philosophical or moral object in view; but whether

from this being the intention of the author, or from the reader being carried away by the poignant charms of his pleasantry and style, the full scope of the incidents is seldom perceived till the conclusion. The most frequent aim of this writer is to place in opposition, what ought to be, and what is; to contrast pedantry with ignorance—the power of the great with their unworthiness—the austerity of religious dogmas with the corruptness of those who inculcate them. Memnon is intended to show, that it is folly to aspire to the height of wisdom, and Zadig, that the events of life are placed beyond our control. L'Homme au quarante ecus was meant to ridicule the system of the economists, and Bacbouc to correct the disposition of the French nation, to behold every thing in a ridiculous point of view, of which among all his countrymen Voltaire was himself the most guilty. But, though the object of this celebrated author, and the charms by which his incidents are adorned, be peculiar to himself, there is seldom much novelty in the incidents themselves. In Micromegas he has imitated an idea of Gulliver's Travels; in the Ingenu, the principal situation is derived from the Baron de Luz, a romance by M. Duclos. The origin of almost every chapter in Zadig may be easily traced; thus the story of *Le Nez* has been suggested by the Matron of Ephesus: in Ariosto may be found *Les Combats*, or the story of the man in green armour, and in one of the Contes Devots, that of the hermit and angel introduced towards the conclusion; the pursuit of the bitch and horse is from the search of the Cynogefore, in the Soirées Bretonnes of Gueulette, who had it from an Italian work, Peregrinaggio de Tre Figliuole del Re Serendippo. The tale, however, had been originlly told in an Arabic work of the 13th century, entitled Nighiaristan, which was written to show the acuteness of the Arabian nation. In the Nighiaristan, three brothers, of the family of Adnan, set out on their travels. They are met by a camel-driver, who asks if they had seen a camel he had lost. One brother says that the animal was blind of an eye; the second that he wanted a tooth; the last that he was lame, and was loaded with oil on one side, and honey on the other. Being thus suspected of having stolen the camel, the brothers are sent



to prison, and afterwards explain to the judge by what observations they had discovered all these circumstances. Another of Voltaire's novels, *La Princesse de Babylon*, has been suggested by a French tale, entitled *Le Parisien et la Princesse de Babylone*, inserted in *La Nouvelle Fabrique des excellens Traits de Verités* par Philippe Alcripe. The name here assumed is fictitious, but the author is known to have been a monk of the Abbey of Mortemer, who lived about the middle of the 16th century. In his tale *Le Parisien*, &c., the beautiful Princess of Babylon has a disgusting and unwelcome suitor in the person of the Sophi of Persia. The son of a French jeweller hearing of her beauty, sends her an amatory epistle, by means of a swallow, and receives a favourable answer by a similar conveyance; and this bird, which corresponds to Voltaire's phœnix, becomes the friend and confidant of the lovers. Afterwards the Parisian repairs to Babylon, and the princess, by feigning sickness, effects an elopement.

In *Candide*, the most celebrated of Voltaire's romances, the incidents seem to possess more novelty. The object of that work, as every one knows, is to ridicule the notion that all things in this world are for the best, by a representation of the calamities of life artfully aggravated. It seems doubtful, however, how far the system of optimism, if rightly understood, is deserving of ridicule. That war, and vice, and disease, are productive of extensive and complicated misery among mankind, cannot indeed be denied, but another arrangement, it must be presumed, was impracticable; and he who doubts that the present system is the most suitable that can possibly be dispensed, seems also to doubt whether the Author of Nature be infinitely good.

3. The next class of fictions, according to the arrangement adopted, comprehends those works of local satire in which remarks on the history, manners, and customs of a nation, are presented through the supposed medium of a foreigner, whose views are unbiassed by the ideas and associations to which the mind of a native is habituated.

Of this species of composition, the object is to show that our manners and arts are not so near perfection as self-

love and habit lead us to imagine ; and its form was adopted, that opinions, religious and political, might be broached with more freedom, by being attributed to outlandish characters, for whose sentiments the author could not be held responsible.

The Turkish Spy (*L'Esploratore Turco*,) seems to have been the prototype of this species of composition. According to some authors it was written by an Italian, named John Paul Marana, who, being involved in political difficulties in his own country, went to reside at Paris, and there wrote the Turkish Spy. It first appeared, it has been said, (*Melanges de Vigneul Marville*,) in the Italian language, and came out in separate volumes, towards the close of the 17th century. I certainly never saw the work in that language, and its Italian original is somewhat questionable. We are told, indeed, in Nichols's *Literary Anecdotes*, that Dr. Manley was the original author, and that Dr. Midgeley, who pretended to have translated it from the Italian, having found it among his papers, appropriated the composition to his own use.

Mahmut, the Turkish Spy, is feigned to have been employed by the Porte to observe the conduct of the Christian courts, and is supposed to have resided at Paris from 1637 to 1682. During this period he corresponds with the Divan, and also with his own friends and confidants at Constantinople. The work comprehends an infinite variety of subjects, but the information communicated is chiefly historical ; the author principally discourses on the affairs of France, but the internal politics of Spain, and England, and the Italian states, are also discussed. In some letters he gives an account of battles, sieges, and other events of a campaign ; descants on the conduct and valour of great captains, and on the fortune of war ; in others he treats of court intrigues, and the subtilties of statesmen. When he addresses his friends and confidants, he amuses them with relations that are comical, affecting, or strange, the new discoveries in art and science, and those antiquarian researches, which, according to his expression, are calculated to draw the veil from the infancy of time, and uncover the cradle of the world. On religious topics he discourses with much freedom, and also on what

he hears concerning the affairs of his own country,—the discontent and rebellion of the beys and bassas, the war with the Persians, and the amours of the seraglio.

The style of this miscellaneous composition is grave, sustained, and solemn, and pomp of expression is preserved, even in the gay and humorous passages. It has been objected to the author, that he treats of all things, but of nothing profoundly. A deep research, however, does not appear to have been his intention, nor is it very consistent with the plan of such a book as the *Turkish Spy*.

The work attributed to Marana was succeeded by the *Persian Letters* of Montesquieu, which is the most popular production of the class with which we are now engaged. Of this celebrated composition, the chief aim is to give ingenious pictures of the misdemeanours of mankind, and to attract the public attention to some important moral and political topics. The principal part of the work consists of the letters of two Persians, with whom, as the author feigns, he had become acquainted at Paris, and had received from them copies of their correspondence. Usbek, one of these foreigners, had fled from the envy and calumny of his countrymen, and, attended only by his friend Rica, had come to the west of Europe, allured by the pursuit of science. The style of the letters of these individuals, which are addressed to their Eastern friends, is widely different. Those of Usbek, even when he writes concerning his seraglio, are philosophical and grave, those of Rica are more light and entertaining. In the correspondence of both, European customs and opinions are contrasted with those of Asia, and the vices and follies of the western world are attacked in an oriental tone and manner. There are also a good many speculations on political economy, especially on the subject of population. In the letters of Usbek to his wives and dependants, there is painted a degree of jealousy of the former, and contempt of the latter, even when in his best humour, which I rather suppose must be strained and exaggerated. “Comment,” (says he in a letter to one of his favourite women,) “comment vous êtes vous oublié jusqu’à ne pas sentir, qu’il ne vous est pas permis de recevoir dans votre chambre un

Eunuque Blanc, tandis que vous en avez de Noirs destinés a vous servir :” he elsewhere expresses the utmost rage against his wives, because they complain, “que la presence continuelle d’un Eunuque Noir les ennuye ;” he is thrown into despair by the following pieces of intelligence, communicated by his grand eunuch, “Zelis allant il y a quelques jours a la Mosque, laissa tomber son voile et parut presque a visage decouvert, devant tout le peuple. J’ai trouve Zachy couchée avec *une* de ses esclaves, chose si defendue par les loix du Serrail.” In writing to his eunuchs, he habitually addresses them, “Rebut indigne de la nature humaine ;” and he reminds them, “Vous n’êtes dans le monde que pour vivre sous mes loix, ou pour mourir des que Je l’ordonne—que ne respirez qu’ autant que mon bonheur, mon amour, ma jalousie meme ont besoin de votre bassesse : et enfin que ne pourrez avoir d’autre partage que la soumission, d’autre ame que mes volontés, d’autre esperance que ma felicité.” This Persian, however, is as extravagant in his commendations as his abuse. Thus, in a letter addressed to Mollak, the keeper of the three tombs, he asks him, forgetting, I suppose, that he was the keeper of these tombs, “Pourquoi vis tu dans les tombeaux, Divin Mollak ?—tu es bien plus fait pour le sejour des etoiles : tu te caches sans doute de peur d’obscurcir le Soleil : tu n’as point de tâches comme cet Astre, mais comme lui tu te couvres de Nuages.”

In the Jewish Spy, by D’Argens, which followed the Persian Letters, there is much sarcasm and invective ; the author thinks strongly, but his style is ungraceful.

The Peruvian Letters, by Madame Graffigny, are somewhat different from the works of this class which I have hitherto mentioned. There is a private and domestic story, interwoven with reflections on manners, and, according to some critics, these letters should be accounted the earliest epistolary novel of France.

Zilia, a Peruvian virgin, when about to be espoused by the Inca, is carried off by the Spaniards. The vessel in which she was conveyed from America is captured on its passage by a French ship. From Paris she corresponds with her Peruvian lover, and expresses the effect that our most common arts and discoveries would have on one,

who had not been accustomed to them from infancy. The commander of the French vessel had conceived for his captive the most violent, but most generous attachment; he does every thing in his power to facilitate for her an interview with the Inca, who, it was understood, had lately arrived in Spain. But the Peruvian monarch had already formed other ties; his religion and his heart were changed. He comes to Paris, but it seems to be only for the purpose of forsaking his mistress in form. Though abandoned to her fate, and disappointed in her dearest expectations, Zilia, pleading the sanctity of the engagements she had come under, from which the infidelity of the Inca could not absolve her, refuses to transfer to her European lover the hand that had been pledged to the Peruvian prince.

The Chinese Spy was written about the middle of the 18th century. It contains the letters of three Mandarins, who were commissioned by their emperor to examine into the state of the religious opinions, policy, and manners of the Europeans. The first of their number remains at Paris, or London, but one of the subordinate mandarins is despatched to Spain, and the other to the Italian states, whence they correspond with the principal emissary. In his despatches to China, the chief Mandarin enters at considerable length into the politics of France and England, and gives some account of the grand epochs of European history from the downfall of the Roman empire. The Italian traveller has merely exhibited a sketch of his journey, but has happily enough described the characteristic features of the petty states he visited; the eagerness of gain at Genoa; the splendid but empty pomp of Milan; the mystery and intrigues of Venice, and the desolation of Ferrara; with regard to the court of Turin, he humorously proposes to purchase it as an ornament for the cabinet of the Chinese emperor. There is a good deal of liveliness and *naïveté* in some of the remarks, and the mode in which things are viewed by these Mandarins: “Une chose surtout nous surprit étrangement; c’étoit de voir marcher de jeunes femmes decouvertes dans les Rues, sans qu’aucun homme les violât.” And again, “Les Negocians d’Europe acquierent de grands biens, avec beaucoup d’aisance—voici comme ils amassent des tresors.



On attire chez soi autant de richesses que l'on peut. Quand on en a fait une bonne provision, l'on ferme sa porte et l'on garde ce qu'on a : Cela s'appelle ici, faire Banqueroute."

Those works that have been just mentioned, gave rise to the more modern productions, *L'Espion Anglois*, *L'Espion Americain en Europe*, and in this country of Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*.

In most of these compositions, particularly the *Chinese Spy* and *Persian Letters*, every thing is seen with a disapproving and satirical eye. This, however, may in some degree be considered as characteristic, since all men are in general disposed to prefer the customs and manners in which they have been educated; and accordingly every variation in the manners of another country, from those which existed in their own, is apt to strike them as a defect, more especially if the latter have been endeared to them by absence. On the whole, the idea of this species of writing must be considered as happy, since, besides furnishing an opportunity for *naïve* remark, and affording greater liberty of examining without offence, or even of contradicting generally received opinions, it presents in a new light objects formerly familiar. Hence we feel a species of pleasure similar to that which is derived from pointing out a well-known striking scene to a stranger, enjoying his surprise, and even in some degree sympathetically partaking of his wonder.

4. The fourth class of French fictions, of the 18th century, recalls us from those works in which the real events of human life are represented, to incidents more stupendous, and enchantments more wonderful, even than those portrayed in the brightest ages of chivalry.

Men of circumscribed conceptions believe in corporeal and limited deities, in preference to one spiritual and omnipotent. They naturally attribute every thing to direct agency—evil to malevolent, and good to beneficent powers. But, even when an infant people has believed in one supreme God, they have deemed all nature full of other invisible beings :—

——— *Passim genios sparsere latentes,  
Qui regerent, motumque darent, vitamque foverent,  
Arboribus Dryadas, fluviorum Naiadas undis,  
Tum Satyros sylvis, et turpia numina Faunos.*

These nymphs and dryads of classical antiquity owed their existence to the same principles of belief which afterwards peopled the elements with fairies, and adventures have been related concerning them which have a considerable analogy to that class of stories on which we are now entering. A scholiast on Apollonius Rhodius relates, that one called Rhoecus, observing a beautiful oak ready to fall, ordered it to be supported. The nymph of the tree, whose existence depended on its preservation, unexpectedly appeared to him, and bade him demand from her whatever he pleased in return. This dryad being handsome, Rhoecus asked to be entertained as her lover, which she readily promised to her preserver, and soon after sent a bee to summon him : but the young man being engaged at the time, and provoked at its unintelligible buzz, drove the insect from him. The nymph, offended at this uncivil treatment of her ambassador, deprived Rhoecus of his sight. The ancients, too, had goddesses, who, like fairies, presided over infants at birth ; and like fairies, the female deities of mythology, avenged themselves on those who treated them with disrespect, when they appeared in a degraded condition. Latona changed the rustics of Lycia into frogs, because they drove her from a fountain at which she attempted to slake her thirst, when flying from the rage of Juno ; and Ceres metamorphosed into a newt a saucy boy who mocked her, for the greed with which she supped some barley broth, when she came weary and in disguise to a cottage. On the other hand, we are told by Palaephatus, that Venus having appeared in shape of a deformed old woman to a poor ferryman, who was himself in the decrepitude of age, and being ferried over by him without reward, she converted him for this service into the beautiful youth so much beloved by Sappho.

Fairies of modern times are of different classes, and have been well divided into the Gothic and Oriental. The former were an appendage of the Scandinavian mythology, and had their origin in the wish to fill the void and uni-

formity of external nature. Their attributes, like those of their eastern sisters, were supernatural power and wisdom, but they were malevolent and revengeful in disposition, and disagreeable in person. They inhabited the heath-clad mountains, the chill lakes, or piny solitudes of the north, and their lineal descendants were long in this country the objects of popular superstition.

The ærial beings, or Peris of the East, owed their imaginary existence to that warmth of fancy which induces us to communicate life to every object in nature. Beneficence and beauty were their characteristics. They lived in the sun or the rainbow, and subsisted on the odour of flowers. Their existence was not interminable, but was of unlimited duration.

A knowledge of these creatures of imagination, was introduced into Europe by the crusaders, and the Moors of Spain. Their attributes and qualities were blended with those of the northern elf, though, as in every other species of romantic fiction, the Eastern ideas were predominant.

Hence, a being was compounded for behoof of the poets and romancers of the age, which, according to local circumstances, to the information or fancy of the author, partook more or less of the Oriental or Gothic ingredients.

The notion of fairies was preserved during the middle ages. They act a conspicuous part in the Fabliaux of the Trouveurs, as the *Lai de Launval* and *Gruelan*. In the enumeration of the subjects of Breton Lais, contained in an old translation of *Lai Le Fraîne*, we are told, that

“Many there beth of Faery.”

*Lancelot du Lac*, one of the most popular tales of chivalry, and in which the Lady of the Lake is the most interesting character, gave an *eclat* to the race of fairies in France. In the subsequent romance of *Isaië le Triste*, we have already seen that they came to act a part still more important and decisive. The story, too, of *Melusina*, which was written about the close of the 14th century, is a complete fairy tale. It was composed by Jean d'Arras, at the desire of the Duke de Berri, son of John, King of France, and is founded on an incident recorded in the archives of

the family of Lusignan, which were in possession of the duke. In this story, a queen of Albania, who was endued with supernatural power, having taken umbrage at the conduct of her husband, retired with her daughter Melusina, then an infant, to the court of her sister, the Queen of the Isle Perdue. Melusina, as she grew up was instructed in the rudiments of sorcery; and the first essay she made of her new-acquired art, was to shut up her father in the interior of a mountain. The mother, who still retained some affection for her husband, sentenced Melusina, as a punishment, to be changed every sabbath into a serpent. This periodical metamorphosis was to continue till she met with a lover who would espouse her on condition of never intruding on her privacy during the weekly transformation; and she was prescribed on these days a course of salutary bathing, which, if duly persisted in, might ultimately relieve her from this disgrace. Melusina accordingly set out in search of a husband, who would accede to these terms, and was in the first place received by the fairies of Poitou with due consideration. They introduced her to a nephew of the Count of Poitiers, who espoused her on the prescribed conditions. He soon became a wealthy and powerful lord, by the machinations of his wife, who was particularly skilful in the construction of impregnable castles; and one, of which she was the architect, afterwards appertained to her descendants the family of Lusignan. At length a brother of the count persuaded him that Sunday was reserved by his wife as a day of rendezvous with a lover. The prying husband having concealed himself in her apartment, beheld his wife making use of the enchanted bath. As soon as Melusina perceived the indiscreet intruder, she departed with a loud yell of lamentation. She has never since that period been visible to mortal eyes: Brantome, however, informs us that she haunts the castle of Lusignan, where she announces by loud shrieks any disaster that is to befall the French monarchy. The building she was supposed to have constructed was destroyed by the Duc de Montpensier, on account of its long and gallant resistance to his arms during the civil wars of France; but the family of Lusignan, till it sunk in that of Montmorenci Luxembourg,

continued to bear for its crest, a woman bathing, in allusion to the story of Melusina.

Hitherto European fairies had not been sufficiently imposing in their attributes, nor gorgeous in their decorations, to attain universal popularity; but the Italian poets of the 15th and 16th centuries arrayed these creatures of imagination in all the embellishments which could be bestowed by poetical genius. They became more splendid and more interesting, and were prepared for that state in which they formed during some years a principal amusement of the most polished nation of Europe.

In the *Nights of Straparola*, which were translated from Italian into French with considerable embellishments, in 1585, we find examples not only of this mode of composition, but outlines of the best known and most popular of the Fairy Tales, as *Le Chat Botté*, *Prince Marcassin*, *Blanchebelle*, *Fortunio*, &c. (See above, vol. ii. p. 123.)

The immediate forerunner and prototype, however, of the French Fairy Tales, was the *Pentamerone* of Signor Basile, written in the Neapolitan jargon, and published in 1672. This work is divided into five days, each of which contains ten stories. The third of the first day, which is slightly altered from the first of the third of *Straparola*, may serve as an example of the close analogy that subsists between this work and the productions of Perrault and his imitators. A poor countryman, who dwelt in the neighbourhood of Salerno, was as remarkable for the deformity of his figure as the dulness of his understanding. One day, while employed in making up fagots in a wood, he perceives three damsels asleep, and erects over them a sort of shed, to screen them from the rays of the sun. When they awake, they inform him he had unwittingly obliged three powerful fairies, and promise in return that he shall at all times obtain of them whatever he may desire. The first use he makes of this unlimited credit is to wish that one of the fagots may be transformed into a horse. While riding home, he is ridiculed on account of his grotesque appearance, by the young Princess of Salerno, and he in revenge wishes that she may become pregnant. In due time she gives birth to twins, and the prince her father, being greatly incensed, orders an assemblage of the male inhabitants of his dominions, in expectation that the children



from instinct will give some indication of their origin. To the astonishment of the court, the uncouth peasant alone receives their unwelcome caresses. He is in consequence sentenced to be drifted to sea in a hogshead, along with the princess and her family. During their voyage, she learns for the first time the story of the adventure with the fairies, and the origin of her pregnancy. On hearing this, she immediately suggests that it would be highly expedient to transform their present awkward conveyance into a more commodious vessel. The wish being formed, the hogshead is of course converted into an elegant and self-directed pinnace, which conveys them to a delightful spot on the shore of Calabria. There, on the formation of a second wish, the boat is instantly changed into a magnificent palace. At the suggestion of the princess, her companion receives, by the same easy expedient, all possible graces of person and endowments of mind. Here the now happy pair spend many years of uninterrupted felicity; at length the Prince of Salerno, being one day carried to a great distance while engaged in the pleasures of the chase, arrives accidentally at this delightful residence, and is there reconciled to his daughter.

The fourth of the third day of the *Pentamerone*, is the origin of *L'Adroite Princesse*, the first fairy tale that appeared in France. This composition has been generally attributed to Charles Perrault, and is placed in some editions of his works. It is dedicated to Madame Murat, afterwards so celebrated for her excellence in similar productions, and is intended to inculcate the moral, that Idleness is the mother of vice, and Distrust of security. These maxims are exemplified in the following manner:

A king, when setting out on a crusade, committed to a well-meaning fairy the charge of his three daughters, *Nonchalante*, *Babillarde*, and *Finette*, names which are expressive of the characters of the princesses. These ladies were shut up in an inaccessible tower, and, at the king's request, the fairy formed three enchanted distaffs; one was bestowed on each princess, and each distaff was fated to fall to pieces, when she to whom it was assigned did any thing contrary to her reputation, of which it appeared to the king that his daughters could have very little opportunity.

At the top of the tower there was a pulley, by means of which the princesses let down a basket, to receive provisions and whatever else they required.

After a short stay in this solitude, the two elder sisters began to grow weary. One day they pulled up in the hamper an old beggar woman, whom they observed at the foot of the tower imploring their assistance. Nonchalante hoped she would act as a servant, and Babillarde was anxious to have some new person to talk with. This mendicant proved to be a neighbouring prince, who was a great enemy of the king, and had assumed this disguise to avenge himself for certain injuries he had sustained. In prosecution of this plan, he made such assiduous court to the two elder sisters, that he soon effected the total destruction of their distaffs. Finette, whom he next importuned, eluded all his artifices: but while on his death-bed, to which he was brought by the snares she laid for him, the prince made his younger brother swear to ask Finette in marriage, and murder her on the night of the nuptials.

Meanwhile the father arrived from his crusade, and immediately asked to see the distaffs of his daughters: each in turn presented the still unbroken distaff of Finette, who had agreed to accommodate them with the loan of it for the occasion. But the king was not to be so easily satisfied, and, to the utter discomfiture of the guilty, demanded to examine them all at one view. The transgression of the elder princesses was thus detected, and they were sent to the palace of the fairy who framed the distaffs, where they were condemned, for a long course of years, the one to hard labour, and the other to silence. The rest of the tale is occupied with the devices by which Finette evaded the fate prepared for her by the younger brother of the betrayer of her sisters.

This tale, as already mentioned, is taken from the *Pentamerone*, and, I think, with little variation of machinery or incident, except that in the Italian work, instead of the distaffs, the princesses are presented with three rings, the brightness of which is the test of the possessor's chastity.

L'Adroite Princesse was succeeded by a volume of fairy tales, unquestionably written by Perrault. It appeared in 1697, and is dedicated to one of the royal family of France,

as written by Perrault D'Armanecour, one of the author's children. All that is contained in each of these stories will be remembered by every one on the mere mention of their titles. *La Barbe Bleue* has a striking resemblance to the story in the *Arabian Nights* of the third Calendar, who has all the keys of a magnificent castle intrusted to him, with injunctions not to open a certain apartment; he gratifies his curiosity, and is punished for his disobedience. It has been said, however, that the original Blue Beard was Gilles, Marquis de Laval, a general in the reigns of Charles VI. and VII., distinguished by his military genius and intrepidity, and possessed of princely revenues, but addicted to magic, and infamous by the murder of his wives, and his extraordinary debaucheries. *La Belle au Bois Dormant* seems to have been suggested by the sleep of Epimenides; it is the best of the tales of Perrault, and first brought that species of writing into fashion. *Le Chat Botté* is from the 1st of the 11th night of Straparola, where the cat of Constantine procures his master a fine castle, and the heiress of a king. *Riquet a la Houpe* is also from Straparola, and the notion has been adopted and expanded by Madame Villeneuve, in the celebrated story *La Belle et la Bete*. In *Le Petit Poucet*, the residence with the ogre is taken from Ulysses in the cave of Polyphemus, or the 4th story of the first young man in the *Bahar Danush*, and the mode of extrication, from the mythological fable of Theseus and Ariadne. To each of these tales a moral is added in bad verse, and some sort of lesson may, no doubt, be extracted from most of them; thus, the scope of *Le Petit Chaperon Rouge* is to warn young people to distrust flatterers; and that of *Barbe Bleue* to repress curiosity. In *Le Maitre Chat, ou Le Chat Botté*, we learn that talents are equivalent to fortune; and from *Le Petit Poucet*, that, with spirit and address, the most defenceless of mankind may escape from the oppression of the most powerful.

The tales of Perrault are the best of the sort that have been given to the world. They are chiefly distinguished for their simplicity, for the *naïve* and familiar style in which they are written, and an appearance of implicit belief on the part of the relater, which perhaps gives us

additional pleasure, from our knowledge of the profound attainments of the author, and his advanced age at the period of their composition.

Soon after the appearance of the tales of Perrault, and towards the close of the reign of Louis XIV., the court of France assumed a serious and moral aspect, and it became fashionable to write libraries for the instruction and amusement of his young and royal descendants. At the same time there were a number of ladies of considerable rank and fortune, who lived much together, and cultivated literature with some success. Every one was tired of the long romances; they required too much time and application, and such novels as Marianne demanded too much genius for every lady of quality to attempt with any prospect of success. Fairy tales, like those of Perrault, were accordingly considered as best adapted to the entertainment and general reputation of the society.

The very circumstance, too, of such a man as Perrault, having employed himself in this species of composition, rescued it from the imputation of childishness, with which it might have been otherwise stigmatized. That occupation could hardly be considered as a trivial employment for a woman of fashion, which had engaged the attention of a profound academician, and who had besides recommended this mode of writing to the female world, in the dedication to one of his tales:—

Les Fables plairont jusqu' aux plus grands esprits,  
Si vous voulez belle Comtesse,  
Par vos heureux talens orner de tels recits;  
L'antique Gaule vous en presse:  
Daignez donc mettre dans leurs jours  
Les Contes ingenus quoique remplis d'adresse,  
Qu'ont inventé les Troubadours;  
Le sens mystérieux que leur tour enveloppe  
Egale bien eclui d'Esope.

The Countess D'Aulnoy, Madame Murat, and Mademoiselle de la Force,\* who were nearly contemporaries, and wrote in the very commencement of the 18th century, were the ladies chiefly eminent for this species of compo-

\* See Appendix, No. 11.

sition. In the tales of Perrault, the decorations of marvellous machinery are sparingly employed. The moral is principally kept in view, and supernatural agency is only introduced where, by this means, the lesson meant to be conveyed can be more successfully inculcated. But the three ladies now before us seem to have vied with each other in excluding nature from their descriptions, and to have written under the impression, that she must bear away the palm whose palace was lighted by the greatest profusion of carbuncles, whose dwarf was most diminutive and hideous, and whose chariot was drawn by the most unearthly monsters. Events bordering on probability were carefully abstained from, and the most marvellous thing in these tales, as Fontenelle has remarked, is, when a person shipwrecked in the middle of the ocean has the misfortune to be drowned.

The tales of the Countess D'Aulnoy, who is the most voluminous of all fairy writers, want the simplicity of those of Perrault, but possess a good deal of wit and liveliness. Her best stories are *L'Oiseau Bleue*, and *Le Prince Lutin*, which is perhaps the most airy and sprightly tale in the *Bibliothèque Bleue*. She has also written *La Belle aux Cheveux d'or*, *Le Rameau d'or*, and *Gracieuse et Percinet*, which seems to have been suggested by the tasks imposed on Psyche, in the story of Cupid and Psyche in Apuleius. A good many, as *Fortunée*, *Le Nain Jaune*, *Le Biche au Bois*, are introduced as episodes of two Spanish novels, entitled *Ponce de Leon*, and *Don Ferdinand de Toledo*, of which the first is a most beautiful and romantic story. Still more numerous are the tales inclosed in the frame of a story, entitled *Le Gentilhomme Bourgeois*, of which *La Chatte Blanche* is the best, though also the most wonderful. In the incidents of these tales there is little invention, most of them being taken, with scarce any variation, from the *Pentamerone* of Basile, or the *Nights of Straparola*. Thus, for example, in the first of the second night, there is the story of a queen of England, who was inconsolable for her want of children. At length, three fairies traverse the air while she is asleep. The first decrees that her majesty should become pregnant of a son, the second that the prince should be endued with every moral



and intellectual perfection, but the third determines that he should come into the world in the shape of a pig, and that he should retain this unfortunate figure until he had married three wives, and received the voluntary caresses of the last. The prince, as was to be expected, wallows in the mire in his early years, and is a great expense for perfumes to his governess and valet de chambre. When full-grown, he is successively united to two ladies, who attempt to murder him, in consequence of which a separation takes place. His mental accomplishments, however, at length so far engage the affections of a beautiful princess, that she overlooks the personal disadvantages under which he laboured, and by this means her husband acquires the shape more usually borne by his species. This story will be at once recognised as *Le Prince Marcassin* of Mad. D'Aulnoy. Her other imitations from Straparola have been pointed out while treating of the works of that novelist. (See above, vol. ii. p. 122.)

In the tales of Madame Murat, there is neither the simplicity of those of Perrault, nor the liveliness of those of D'Aulnoy. She writes *Le Parfait Amour—Anguilette—Jeune et Belle*. Her best is *Le Palais de Vengeance*, where an enchanter, being enamoured of a princess who refused to requite his affection, shut her up in a delicious palace, with the lover for whose sake she had rejected his suit. Here, as the magician expected, they were speedily reduced to a state of *ennui*, resembling that of Mad. du Deffand and the President Henault, during the day which they had agreed to devote to each other's society.

Mademoiselle de la Force, who is author of *Plus belle que Feê*, *L'Enchanteur*, *Tourbillon*, *Vert et Bleue*, has outdone all her competitors in marvellous extravagance. Enchanted palaces of opal or diamond were becoming vulgar accommodations, and this lady introduced the luxury of a palace flying from place to place, with all its pleasure grounds and gardens along with it.

Though the tales of the three ladies above-mentioned are very different in point of style, there runs through them a great uniformity of incident. The principal characters are in the most exalted situations of life, they are either paragons of beauty or monsters of deformity; and

if there be more than one princess in a family, the youngest, as in the case of *Psyche*, is invariably the most amiable and most lovely. Fairies, who aid or overturn the schemes of mortals, are an essential ingredient. The tale usually begins with the accouchement of a queen, at which some fairy presides, or is indignant at not having presided, and generally ends with the nuptials of an enamoured prince and princess. It commonly happens that the lady is shut up in an enchanted palace. Hence the sagacity and valour of a prince are employed for her deliverance, and in this enterprise he must be aided by a benevolent fairy, whom he has most likely propitiated by services unwittingly performed when she was in the shape of some degraded animal. Love and envy are the only passions brought into action: all the distresses arise from confinement, metamorphosis, or the imposition of unreasonable tasks.

About the same period with these ladies, a number of inferior writers, as the authors of *La Tyrannie des Fées détruite*, and *Contes moins contes que les autres*, attempted similar compositions. They were more recently followed in the *Boca ou la Vertu Recompensée* of Mad. Marchand, written in 1735; as also in *Le Prince Invisible* and *le Prince des Aigues Marins* of Mad. Leveque, whose tales are remarkable for the fine verses introduced, and the delicacy of the sentiments. *Les Feeries Nouvelles* is the title of a number of tales by the Count de Caylus, who, leaving the Egyptians, Etruscans, and Gauls, has related his stories with a simplicity, *naïveté*, and sarcastic exposure of foibles in character, which could hardly be expected from one who had laboured so much in the mines of antiquity. *Les Contes Marins* de Mad. Villeneuve, published in 1740, are so termed because related by an old woman to a family while on their passage to St. Domingo. The best known of these tales is *La Belle et La Bête*, the first part of which, perhaps, surpasses all that has been produced by the lively and fertile imaginations of France or Arabia. *Les Soirées Bretonnes*, by Gueulette, so well known by his numerous imitations of the Eastern tales, also possessed considerable reputation. This volume is partly imitated from an Italian work,

entitled *Peregrinaggio de tre figliuoli del Re de Serendippo*, and the stories it contains are feigned to have been related in the course of a number of evenings, to relieve the melancholy of a princess of Britany, as those in the *Peregrinaggio* had been told to console Sultan Behram for the loss of his favourite queen, whom that Mirror of Justice and Mercy had condemned to be torn to pieces by lions on account of an ill-timed jest on his skill in archery. The search for the *Cynogefore*, in the *Soirées Bretonnes*, and which also occurs in the Italian work, has given rise to the pursuit of the bitch and the horse, a well known incident in Voltaire's *Zadig*. There is also, both in the *Peregrinaggio* and *Soirées Bretonnes*, the story of an Eastern king who possessed the power of animating a dead body by flinging his own soul into it; but having incautiously shot himself into the carcass of a fawn which he had killed while hunting, his favourite vizier, to whom he had confided the secret whereby this transmigration was accomplished, occupied the royal corpse, which had been thus left vacant, and returned to the palace, where he personated his master. At length the king had an opportunity of passing into the remains of a parrot, in which shape he allowed himself to be taken captive and presented to the queen. The vizier afterwards, in order to gratify her majesty by a display of his mysterious science, animated the carcass of a favourite bird which had died, when the king seized the opportunity of re-entering his own body, which the vizier had now abandoned, and instantly twisted off the neck of his treacherous minister.

This story is so universal that it has been also related, with a slight variation of circumstances, in the *Bahar Danush*, (c. 45 and 46),—in the *Persian Tales*, whence it has been copied in No. 578 of the *Spectator*,—in a mystical romance by Francis Beroalde, and in the *Illustres Feés*, under title of *Le Bienfaisant ou Quiribirini*. The last mentioned collection contains a good many other fairy tales, which have become well known and popular. Few of them, however, have been invented by the authors;—*Blanchebelle* is taken from the third of the third night of

Straparola, and Fortunio from the fourth of the third of the same novelist. (See above, vol. ii. p. 122.)

Besides those that have been enumerated, there were an infinite number of tales inserted in the *Mercur de France*, many of which were anonymous, and afterwards appeared in different collections, as *La Bibliotheque des Feés et des Genies*, by the Abbe de la Porte. The most eminent men in France disdained not to contribute to these collections, as appears from *La Reine Fantasque* of Rousseau, the *Aglæe ou Nabotine* of the Painter Coypel, and the *Acajou et Zirphile* of M. Duclos.

I may here mention, though they can hardly be denominated fairy tales, the *Veilles de Thessalie* of Mad. de Lussan, which are chiefly stories of incantation and magic. They turn on what once formed the popular superstitions of Thessaly, and those enchantments, of which illusion is the chief, supposed to have been practised by certain persons in that part of Greece. The work of Apuleius probably suggested that of Madame Lussan. It is strange that she had no imitators, considering the novel and impressive machinery she has made use of, and the admirable manner in which in some of the stories, especially the first, it has been employed by her.

Every person is aware of the wonderful popularity which those productions, known by the name of *Contes des Feés*, enjoyed for many years in France. The Comte de Caylus says, in his preface to *Cadichon*, written in 1768, "*Les Contes des Feé sont eté long tems a la mode, et dans ma jeunesse on ne lisoit gueres que cela dans le monde.*"

A species of tale of a totally different tone from that with which we have been engaged, and which had its foundation in Eastern manners and mythology, was also prevalent in France at the same period with the fairy tales of European birth. These oriental fictions had their origin in the encouragement extended to Asiatic literature in the reign of Louis XIV., the eagerness with which the translations of the Arabian and Persian tales were received by the public, and the facility afforded to this species of composition by the information concerning Eastern

manners, communicated in the *Bibliothèque Orientale* of D'Herbelot, and the *Travels* of Chardin.

In the Eastern mythology, those imaginary beings, believed to be intermediate between God and man, are more numerous, and their attributes more striking, than in the superstitions of any other region. It was believed that before the creation of Adam the world was inhabited by genii, of whom some were called *Peris* and others *Dives*. Of these, the former were beautiful in person and amiable in disposition, and were contrasted with the latter, who were of inauspicious appearance and malevolent temper. After the formation of man, these beings retired in a great measure from earth to a region of their own, called *Ginistan*, a very remote empire, but continued occasionally to intermeddle in sublunary affairs—the *Peris* employing themselves for the benefit, and the *Dives* for the ruin, of mankind. Both frequently instructed mortals in their arts or knowledge, who thus became enchanterers or magicians, and were evil or well disposed, according to the frame of mind of their teachers. This mythology is the foundation of those Eastern tales, which produced so many imitations in France. Next to this species of machinery, the most characteristic feature of these compositions is the peculiar manners and state of society delineated, especially that despotism which regards as nothing the lives and fortunes of mankind, and which, even without the intervention of supernatural agency, produces a quick transition from misfortune to prosperity, or from a state of the highest elevation to one of complete dejection.

The indolence peculiar to the genial climates of Asia, and the luxurious life which the kings and other great men led in their seraglios, made them seek for this species of amusement, and set a high value on the recreation it afforded. Being ignorant, and consequently credulous, and having little passion for moral improvement, or knowledge of nature, they did not require that these tales should be probable or of an instructive tendency: it was enough if they were astonishing. Hence most oriental tales are extravagant, and their incidents are principally carried on by prodigy. As the taste, too, of the hearers was not improved by studying the simplicity of nature, and as they



chiefly piqued themselves on the splendour of their equipage, and the vast quantity of jewels and curious things which they could heap together in their repositories, the authors, conformably to this taste, expatiate with peculiar delight in the description of magnificence, of rich robes and gaudy furniture, costly entertainments, and sumptuous palaces.

Of all Eastern stories, the most celebrated, at least in Europe, are the Arabian Tales, or the Thousand and One Nights. These are supposed to have been written after the period of the Arabian conquests in the West, and probably between the end of the 13th and close of the 14th century. It may indeed be fairly conjectured that they were not composed till the military spirit of the Arabians had in some degree abated. Heroes and soldiers perform no part in these celebrated tales of wonder, and the only classes of men exhibited are cadis, merchants, calenders, and slaves. In the story, too, of the Barber, some event is recorded as having happened during the reign of Monstancer Billah, the 36th caliph of the race of the Abasides, and who was raised to that dignity in the 623d year of the Hegira, that is, in 1226. Whether the Arabian Nights are a collection of oriental romances, or the production of a single genius, has been much disputed. It is most likely that they were written in their present form by one individual, but that, like the Decameron, or Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, the incidents were borrowed from various sources—the traditions of Arabia, and even of Persia, Hindostan, and Greece. The story of Polyphemus is in the third voyage of Sinbad. Other parts of the adventures of that bold mariner seem to be borrowed from the History of Aristomenes, in Pausanias; and we also find incorporated in the Arabian Tales, the traditions concerning Phædra and Circe, and the story of Joseph with characteristic decorations.

The Heeotopades had probably suggested to the Arabian writer the idea of inclosing his stories in a frame, and from his example this plan has been adopted in all similar compositions. The frame of the Arabian Tales is less complex and involved than that of the Heeotopades, but is not very ingenious. A sultan, as is well known, irritated

by the infidelity of his wife, resolves to espouse a new sultana every evening, and to strangle her in the morning, to prevent the accidents of the day. At length the daughter of the vizier solicits the hand of this indulgent bridegroom, interrupts the progress of these frequent and sanguinary nuptials, and saves her own life by the relation of tales, in which she awakens and suspends the sultan's curiosity. Her husband was perhaps as childish in his clemency as absurd in his cruelty, yet the stories are so interesting, that, as a French critic has remarked, there is no one but would have insisted to learn the conclusion, could he have exclaimed with his majesty, "*Je la ferai toujours bien mourir demain.*" The stories are too well known, and too numerous, to admit of analysis; their chief merit consists in the admirable delineation of Eastern manners, the knavery of slaves, the hypocrisy of dervises, the corruption of judges, the baneful influence of that despotism which has remained the same amid all Asiatic revolutions, and the boldness and artifice of the women, who risk so much the more in proportion to the rigour with which they are confined. The sultana, indeed, which has been considered a defect in these tales, seems merely intent on saving her life, and appears to have had no design, by the tendency of the stories, to convince her husband of the fidelity and virtue of woman.

In the Persian Tales, on the other hand, where there is a princess as much prepossessed against the male sex as the sultan in the Arabian Nights against the female, the scope of all the stories is to persuade the fair one that there exist such things as lasting attachment and conjugal felicity. A princess of Caschmire was of such resplendent beauty, that all who had the misfortune to behold her lost their reason, or fell into a languishing state, by which they were insensibly destroyed. The king, her father, soon perceived that his dominions were about to be depopulated, or converted into a capacious bedlam. He, therefore, shut up his daughter in a tower, and engaged her nurse to overcome her aversion to matrimony by the relation of tales, most of which, accordingly, furnish some example of a faithful lover or affectionate husband. The delicacy of the princess is never to be satisfied, and she has always

some exception to make against the tenderness or ardour of attachment in the hero of the tale. This gives rise to a new narrative, in which the nurse attempts to realize the *beau ideal* of her fastidious *eleve*; but it requires the stories of a thousand and one days to overcome her obduracy. In these tales there is more delicacy, but less vigour and invention, than in the Arabian, which is perhaps consistent with the character and genius of the nations by which they were produced. It is ascertained that they were written at a period long subsequent to the Arabian Nights. They are also supposed to be the work of a dervish, which has been inferred from the number of traditions drawn from Mahometan mythology, and that hatred which the stories breathe to the religion of the magi, which was overthrown by the successors of the prophet.

The Arabian and Persian tales were translated into French, the former by Galland, the latter by Petis de la Croix and Le Sage, and were published in the beginning of the 18th century. Both have been manufactured for the European market, and additional wonders and enchantments woven into them:—

Et, loin de se perdre en chemin,  
Parurent sortant de chez Barbin  
Plus Arabe qu' en Arabie.

Petis de la Croix is also the translator of *L'Histoire de la Sultane de Perse et des Visirs, Contes Turcs*, a work founded on the story of Erastus, or the Seven Wise Masters, and attributed to Checzade, preceptor of Amurath Second. In this collection we have the story of Santon Barissa, a holy man, who had spent his life in a grotto in fasting and prayer. He obtained the reputation of a chosen favourite of Heaven, and it was believed that when he made vows for the health of a sick person, the patient was immediately cured. The daughter of the king of the country being seized with a dangerous illness, was sent to the Santon, to whom the devil presented himself on this occasion. Our hermit, yielding to his suggestion, declared that it was necessary for her cure that the princess should pass the night in the hermitage. This being agreed to,

“Le Santon,” says the French translation, “dementit en un moment une vertu de cent années!” He is led from the commission of one crime to another: to conceal his shame he murders the princess, buries her body at the entrance of the grotto, and informs her attendants, on their return in the morning, that she had already left the hermitage. The dead body is afterwards discovered by information of the devil, and the Santon is brought to condign punishment. In this situation the demon appears, and promises to bear him away if he consent to worship him; but the Evil Spirit has no sooner received a sign of adoration, than he leaves Barsisa to the mercy of the executioner.

This tale was originally told by Saadi, the celebrated Persian poet, in a species of sermon, where it is quoted as a parable, along with other ingenious and applicable stories. It was imitated in Europe at an early period, in one of the Contes Devots, entitled *De L’Hermite que le Diable trompa*, a tale of which Le Grand enumerates four different versions (vol. v. p. 229). From the Turkish Tales it was at length inserted in the Guardian, and became the origin of Lewis’s Monk, where Ambrosio, a monk of the highest reputation for eloquence and sanctity in Madrid, is persuaded by an evil spirit in human shape to violate the beautiful Antonia, and afterwards to murder her, in order that his guilt might be concealed. These crimes being detected, he is hurried to the dungeons of the Inquisition, where the devil being invoked, agrees to deliver him from confinement, on condition that he should make over his soul to him in perpetuity. Ambrosio having ratified this contract, is borne away in the talons of the demon, who afterwards tears and dashes him to pieces amid the cliffs of the Sierra Morena.

The History of Dr. Faustus, as it has been dramatized by Goethe, is a similar tale. Faustus, a wise and learned man, is amorously tempted by the devil, and after being led by his suggestion from one excess to another, is finally carried off by him to perdition.

The stupendous incident and gorgeous machinery of the oriental tales soon attracted notice, and made a strong impression on the fancy. Figurative style, and wild inven-

tion, are easily imitated. Manners, which are marked and peculiar, but of which the minute shades are not very accurately known, are easily described. Accordingly, the imitators of oriental fiction have given us abundance of jewels and eunuchs, cadis, necromancers, and slaves. Their personages are all Mahometans or Pagans, who are subject to the despotic sway of caliphs, bashaws, and viziers, who drink sherbet, rest on sophas, and ride on camels or dromedaries.

Gueulette is the principal French imitator of oriental tales. He is the author of *Les mille et un quart d'heure*, *Contes Tartares*, which resemble the Persian and Arabian tales, both in the frame by which they are introduced, and the nature of the stories themselves.

A dervis, who, we are told by this author, dwelt in the neighbourhood of Astracan, returning one evening to his cell, found it occupied by a new-born infant. He confided the child to the wife of a tailor of Astracan, from whom he was accustomed to receive alms. The foundling was called Schems-Eddin, and was brought up to the trade of his reputed father. In his youth he is seen and admired by one of the fair inhabitants of the seraglio, and is privately sent for on pretence that she wishes him to make her a habit. At one of the interviews which follow this message, he is surprised by the arrival of the king, who, when about to sacrifice the lovers to his jealousy, is himself slain by Schems-Eddin. It is now ascertained, by an account given by an old sultana, that Schems-Eddin is the son of the King of Astracan, whom he had just killed, and that he had been exposed in his infancy in consequence of the prediction of an astrologer, that he was destined to murder his father. Schems-Eddin ascends the throne of Astracan, and espouses the object of his affections, but being still tormented with remorse for the involuntary assassination of his parent, he sets out with his sultana on a pilgrimage of expiation to Mecca. While returning the sultana falls sick, and being believed dead she is inclosed in a magnificent coffin. The sultan is next attacked by a tribe of Bedouin Arabs; he is left for dead on the plain, and deprived of the coffin in which his consort was enshrined. On his arrival at Astracan, he finds his throne



occupied by an usurper, his eyes are put out, and he is thrown into a dungeon. A counter-revolution restores him to power and liberty, but his physicians in vain attempt to find a remedy for his blindness. At length one of their number declares that in the Isle of Serendib (Ceylon) there is a tree, and on that tree sat a bird, round whose neck hung a phial containing a liquor, which was a specific in the most obdurate cases of ophthalmia. The physician is despatched to procure a supply of this liquor. During his absence the king was accustomed to pass an hour in public, and a fourth part of this space was devoted to conversation with sages, or spent in listening to the adventures of those strangers who frequented his court. His viziers, however, began to be afraid that this fund of amusement would be at length exhausted. Accordingly, the son of the physician who had gone to Serendib, and who, it seems, was a great reader, and possessed of a retentive memory, undertook to amuse his majesty till the return of his father, by the relation of stories for a quarter of an hour each day.

In the tales thus introduced there is little originality of invention. The machinery and decorations are borrowed from oriental tales, and a great number of the incidents from the *Nights of Straparola*. *L'Histoire de Sinadab fils du Medecin Sacan* is from the first tale in that work. An old man recommended to his son never to attach himself to a prince, never to reveal a secret to his wife, nor to foster a child of which he was not the father. Sinadab, however, by his talents and virtues, became the chief favourite of a monarch, whose sister he espoused; and, having no children, he brought up the son of one of his slaves as his own. He was now completely happy and prosperous, and laughed at the dotage of his father. In course of time he revealed a trifling transgression as a secret to his wife. She immediately informed her brother, and he was instantly condemned to death by his ungrateful master. So popular, however, had been his character, that no one could be found to cut off his head, till Roumy, his adopted son, voluntarily offered to perform this office. In *Straparola*, a Genoese merchant gives similar advice to his son, and his neglect of it is attended with like consequences. The

story of *Le Chien de Sahed* and *Cadi of Candahar*, is a tale already mentioned, as occurring in the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, and in an infinite number of other fabulous productions, (see above, vol. ii. p. 143.) *Les Bossus de Damas* is from the fabliau *Les Trois Bossus*, and *Le Centaure Bleue* from the 1st of the 4th of *Straparola*. A few, as the history of *Feridoun* and *Mahalen*, King of Borneo, are told by *Khondemir*, and other oriental writers. *L'Histoire de Faruk*, where a son refuses to contend with his brothers for the sovereignty, by shooting an arrow at the dead body of his father, is the Fabliau *Le Jugement de Solomon*, (*Le Grand*, vol. ii. p. 426,) or 45th chapter of *Gesta Romanorum*. Another part of the same story, where a judge discovers that his son has been guilty of a robbery, by a ring which he had obtained from him, is from the tale related in the *Arabian Nights* by a Jew physician, (see vol. ii. N. 156.) The story *Du vieux Calender* corresponds with the *Two Dreams* in the *Seven Wise Masters*, and with the Fabliau *Le Chevalier a la Trappe*. It is a curious coincidence in fiction, that these three stories are the same with the plot of the *Miles Gloriosus* of *Plautus*, said to be taken from a Greek play, entitled *Αλαζων*.

*L'Histoire d'Alcouz, Taher, et du Meunier*, which contains an exaggerated picture of female infidelity, is precisely the fifth novel of the *Printemps* of *Jaques Yver*, printed in 1575.

These tales chiefly turn on sudden vicissitudes and changes of fortune. They are far inferior to the genuine Eastern tales, but are regarded as the best of the French imitations.

The stories are at length terminated by the return of the physician with the precious eye-water. On arriving at Ceylon, the emissary found that the tree could only be ascended in safety by a woman who had never failed in fidelity to her husband. No one was willing to risk the experiment, but it was at length undertaken by the Sultana of Astracan, who, though believed dead by her husband, had been discovered to be alive by the Arabs. Having escaped from their power, but having missed her way, she had arrived at the court of the King of Ceylon on her road from Arabia to Astracan. She now accompanied

the physician to the empire of her husband, who prized the salutary medicine she brought not merely as a restorative to sight, but as an unexceptionable testimony to the unaltered affections of his sultana.

Gueulette is also author of *Les Contes Chinois, ou les Aventures Merveilleuses du Mandarin Fum-Hoam*. These tales are introduced in the following manner:—An emissary is despatched by a Chinese monarch to Circassia, with orders to procure for his master the most beautiful females of that country. He returns with a large and well-chosen selection, and accompanied at the same time by the king and princess of Georgia, whom he had met in the course of his mission, and to whom, as they had been expelled their kingdom by an usurper, he had offered an asylum at his residence in Tonquin. The Chinese monarch beholds with perfect indifference the compliant beauties of Circassia, but becomes deeply enamoured of the Georgian refugee. Anxious, however, to ascertain if he can gain her affections, divested of the lustre of a diadem, he attempts to win her heart in the assumed character of the brother of her host, while she is, at the same time, courted by a mandarin, who was instructed to personate his sovereign. When the triumph of the Georgian princess is completed by her acceptance of the offer, apparently least advantageous, she is united to her royal lover under his true name and character. The new queen stipulates for enjoyment of a free exercise of the Mahometan religion, but her husband, at the same time, undertakes to convert her to the doctrines of Chacabout, (especially that part of them in which the belief of the transmigration of souls was inculcated, the point on which she chiefly stickled,) by means of the sage discourses of the mandarin Fum-Hoam. This personage is every evening summoned into the august presence of his mistress, and relates with much gravity the various adventures which he had experienced in the different bodies his soul had animated, of every sex and situation. He had also occasionally passed into the form of inferior animals, as lapdogs and fleas, which gave him an opportunity of witnessing and relating the most secret adventures.

*Les Sultanes de Guzaratte, ou Les Songes des Hommes*

éveillés, Contes Mogols, is from the same prolific pen as the Chinese and Tartar Tales. The Sultan of Guzaratte, a district in the Mogul empire, had four wives, with whom he lived, and who lived together in the utmost harmony. Smitten at length with the charms of a Circassian beauty, he associates her in the empire, and, in a great measure, withdraws his confidence and affection from the elder sultanas. At the end of fifteen years he begins to doubt the fidelity of his Circassian favourite, and in some degree to repent of the neglect with which he had treated her rivals. Wishing to discover their secret thoughts and sentiments, he consults a celebrated cabalist, by whose advice he transports his wives to a place, so constructed that from a certain apartment every thing was seen and heard that was done or said in the interior of the building. The sultanas being lodged in this magical dwelling, their husband next spreads a report of his death, and occasionally repairs to the palace, in order to witness, unseen, the manner in which they pass the days of their imagined widowhood. After the period of mourning is elapsed, the sultanas employ certain persons to watch at the caravansary, to give the travellers who arrive a sleeping potion, and bear them to the palace, in order that on the following day they might entertain these ladies with a detail of their adventures. All the tales in the work are stories thus introduced. The last party conveyed to the residence of the sultanas consists of a company of dancers and comedians, one of whom the Circassian espouses, to the great indignation of the sultan.

Les Contes Orientaux of the Count de Caylus, are related to a King of Persia, afflicted with a *coma vigil*, in order to lull him asleep. In this work, L'Histoire de la Corbeille, which is announced as "plus longue que celle de Feredbaad," and "plus triste que celle de Wamak-weazra," is the story of a prosperous and happy monarch, at whose court a dervis arrives, plunged in profound melancholy. The king being desirous to learn the occasion of his sadness, is informed by him that he can only ascertain its cause by repairing to a certain city in China. Thither the sultan departs, and on his arrival finds all its inhabitants overwhelmed with affliction. His curiosity

being thus still farther excited, by the instructions of one of them, he throws himself into a basket which hung suspended over the walls of a ruinous castle, and is forthwith carried up with velocity to a delightful region, where he passes his time in all imaginable pleasures, and in the society of a woman of angelic charms. After a time he is let down in the basket to this lower region, for the amusements of which he has now lost all relish, and, like the dervis, passes the remainder of his days in vexation and disappointment, at the loss of those exquisite enjoyments of which he had partaken, and by which all others were rendered tasteless. This story, which was originally intended as a moral fiction, to show that God has dealt mercifully with mankind, in not vouchsafing a clearer revelation of the joys of eternity, has prevailed all over the world, from the traditions of the Brahmins to the mythology of Scandinavia. It is related at full length in the story of Yezzez, contained in the 38th and the two following chapters of the *Bahar-Danush*, and in the 19th fable of the *Edda*, where we are told that "Frey having ascended the throne of the Universal Father, and entered a magnificent palace in the middle of the city, saw a woman come out of it, whose hair was so bright that it gave lustre to the air and waters. At that sight, Frey, in the punishment of his audacity, in mounting that sacred throne, was struck with sudden sadness, insomuch, that after his descent he could neither speak, nor sleep, nor drink."

The tales of Count Hamilton, *Fleur d'Epine* and *Les quatre Facardins*, are chiefly intended as a satire on the taste then prevalent for oriental fiction. *Fleur d'Epine* is introduced as the last night of the *Arabian Tales*, and is related by the sister of the sultana. We are told that a princess of Caschmire was so resplendently beautiful, that all who beheld her were struck blind or perished, a commencement intended to ridicule the early part of the *Persian tales*. A prince in disguise, who, at this time, resided with the king's seneschal, offers, by the assistance of a fairy, to overcome the baleful effects, without diminishing the lustre of her charms. The fairy, to whom he alluded, had promised him this remedy on condition that he should rescue her daughter *Fleur d'Epine*, from the power of a



malevolent enchantress, and should also dispossess her enemy of the musical horse and the cap of light. The story is occupied with this achievement, and the amours of Fleur d' Epine and the prince.

Les quatre Facardins, which is partly a fairy tale and partly a romance of chivalry, contains the adventures of the Prince of Trebizonde, the lover of Dinarzade. It is intended as a general satire on all incredible adventures, but is far inferior in merit to *Fleur d' Epine*.

To the class of fairy and oriental tales may be referred that species of composition which in France was known under the title of *Voyages Imaginaires*, and which, in an historical account of fictitious writing, it would not be proper altogether to neglect. These productions bear the same relation to real voyages and travels as the common novel or romance to history or biography. They have been written with different views, but are generally intended to exhibit descriptions, events and subjects of instruction, which are not furnished by the scenes or manners of the real world. In some cases, as in *Robinson Crusoe*, mankind are led to appreciate their own exertions by seeing what their species is capable of when in perfect solitude, and abandoned to its own resources. In *l' Isle Inconnue* they are shown what they may attain when confined to domestic society, and excluded from all intercourse with the rest of the world. Sometimes the imaginary traveller is received among nations of perfect and ideal wisdom. At others, the author, seizing the advantages presented by shipwrecks and pirates, throws his characters on some inhospitable shore, the fancied distance of which entitles him to people it with all sorts of prodigies and monsters. The planets, too, and centre of the earth were made the theatres of these chimerical expeditions, which, even in their most common form, are entertaining; and in their more improved state have sometimes become, as in the case of the celebrated work of Swift, the vehicle of the keenest satire, and even of philosophical research.

The origin of this species of fiction may be attributed to the *True History of Lucian*. Homer's *Odyssey*, however, in which that poet talks of the *Anthropophagi* and giants with one eye in their forehead, is the remote original of

this sort of fabling. Ctesias, the Cnidian, reported many incredible tales in his history of the Indians, and Iamblichus still more equivocal relations in his Wonders of the Sea. These persons, however, were *bona fide* historians, or at least were serious in wishing to impose on their readers. The work of Lucian is the first that is professedly fabulous, though no doubt suggested by the false relations of these writers. Indeed, the satirist himself acquaints us that every thing he says glances at some one of the old poets or historians who have recorded untruths which are incredible.

Lucian relates, that prompted by curiosity, he sailed from the pillars of Hercules and launched into the western ocean. For some time he had a prosperous voyage, but was at length overtaken by a tempest, which, after two months' continuance, drove him on a delightful island, where he saw many wonders. The rivers there were of wine, and the summit of the trees were women from the waist upwards; to these a few of the crew were for ever transfixed by hazarding some gallantries. Those mariners who with Lucian again launched into the deep, were speedily carried into the air by a whirlwind, and borne with immense velocity towards a shining land, which, on reaching it, they discovered to be the moon. They were here saluted by men riding on monstrous vultures, who conducted them to the court of their king, who proved to be the well-known Endymion. That prince was engaged in a war with Phaeton, King of the Sun; the two potentates having quarrelled with regard to their right of colonizing the Morning Star. The strangers were graciously received by his lunar majesty, who begged their assistance in the ensuing campaign, and, as an inducement, offered to furnish each with a prime vulture. This proposition being agreed to, Lucian set out with the lunar army and auxiliaries from the constellation of the Bear, who were mounted on fleas of the dimensions of elephants. A swarm of spiders, which accompanied the army, was detached to weave between the moon and morning star a web, which, when formed, was chosen as the field of battle. Here the troops of Endymion encountered the enemy, composed of the solar battalions and the allies

from Sirius. In the engagement Lucian's friends were worsted, their king taken prisoner, and Lucian himself along with him. On the conclusion of peace, he attempted to return to the moon, but was driven into the sea, where he was swallowed up by a whale, in whose interior there are immense regions, with forests and cities, and wars are carried on by the inhabitants. Lucian and his companions at length extricated themselves by setting fire to the woods, which consumed the monster. They next sailed through a sea of milk, and came to an island of cheese, &c. &c.

In the *True History of Lucian*, the satire is too broad and exaggerated. His work is a heap of extravagancies, put together without order or unity, and his wonders are destitute of every colour of plausibility. "Animal trees," says Dr. Beattie in his excellent *Essay on Poetry*, "ships sailing in the sky—armies of monstrous things travelling between the sun and moon on a pavement of cobwebs—rival nations of men inhabiting woods and mountains in a whale's belly, are liker the dreams of a bedlamite than the inventions of a rational being."

The spirit of those extravagant relations satirized by Lucian never was extinguished, and fictitious embellishments were mingled even with genuine narrative. The inclination for the marvellous, which prevailed during the dark ages, was not confined to romances of chivalry, but pervaded every department of literature and science. This led to a similar style in the relations of those travellers, who described remote countries. Such productions would have been little attractive to their readers, unless filled with wonders of nature and superhuman productions of art. Accordingly, Benjamin, a Jew of Tudela, who penetrated through Persia to the frontiers of China, about the middle of the 12th century, and Marco Polo, a Venetian nobleman, who visited the same regions a hundred years afterwards, related in the account of their travels many marvellous and romantic stories. The works of Mandeville was translated in the 15th century into almost all the languages of the continent, and was published in the collection of Ramusio. At the same time the *Mirabilia mundi* of Solinus, which contains many wonderful relations in

the style of the *Voyages Imaginaires*, was early translated into French, and became a popular work.

The Travels of Ferdinand Mendez Pinto, whom Addison terms a person of infinite adventure and unbounded imagination, was the type of incidents which were indeed professedly fictitious, but which were scarcely more incredible.

We also meet with an example of the more philosophical class of the *Voyages Imaginaires* in the Arabian story of Hai Ebn Yokdhan, written by Ebn-Tophail, a Mahometan philosopher, who was contemporary with Averroes, and lived towards the close of the twelfth century, in some part of the Saracenic dominions in Spain. This work was translated by Moses Narbonensis into Hebrew, and into Latin by Mr. Pococke, 1671. There have been several English versions through the medium of the Latin, and one from the original Arabic by Simon Ockley, published in 1708.

In the spiritual romance of Josaphat and Barlaam, we have beheld a prince immured from the world, gradually acquire, by meditation, moral notions and ideas of disease and of death. Previous also, to the time of Ebn-Tophail, and in the beginning of the 11th century, this system of self-improvement had been exemplified in a tract by the celebrated Avicenna, whose work is an outline of that of Ebn-Tophail. In the sketch by Avicenna, it is feigned that a human being was produced in a delightful but uninhabited island, without the intervention of mortal parents, by mere concurrence of the elements—a notion not unlike the systems of Democritus and Epicurus, as explained by Lucretius, (B. 2.) The being, hatched in this unusual manner, though destitute of instruction, obtained, by exertion, what was most essential to personal convenience, and finally arrived, by meditation, at the abstract truths of religion. This idea has been more fully developed by Ebn-Tophail, whose chief design is to show that human capacity, unassisted by external help, may not only supply outward wants, but attain to a knowledge of all subjects of nature, and so, by degrees, discover a dependence on a Superior Being, the immortality of the soul, and other doctrines necessary to salvation.

We are told by this Arabian writer, that there was an island in the Indian Ocean, and lying under the equinoctial line, which was governed by a king of proud and tyrannical disposition. This prince had a sister of exquisite beauty, whom he confined in a tower, and restrained from marriage, because he could not match her with one suitable to her quality. Nevertheless this lady had been privately espoused by a young man of the name of Yokdhan, and, in consequence of this union, gave birth to a son. Dreading the resentment of her brother, she set the child afloat in a little chest, which the tide carried on the same night to an uninhabited island at no great distance. As the tide rose higher than usual, it deposited the chest in a shady grove, which stood near the shore, and there left it on receding. Here Ebn-Yokdan (for that was the name the child had received when exposed by his mother) was suckled by a roe. As the boy grew up he followed his nurse, which showed all imaginable tenderness, and, being unusually intelligent, carried him to places where fruit-trees grew, and fed him with the ripest and the sweetest of their produce. At mid-day, when the sunbeams were fierce, she shaded him; at night, she cherished and kept him warm. In time she accustomed him to go with the herds of deer, among which he gained many ideas, and received various impressions, gradually acquiring the desire of some things, and an aversion for others. In noting the properties of different animals, he did not fail to remark that they were all provided with offensive weapons, as hoofs, horns, or claws, while he was naked and unarmed, whence he always came off with the worst whenever there happened any controversy about gathering the fruits which fell from the trees. He farther observed that his companions were clothed with hair, wool, or feathers, while he was exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather. When about seven years of age, he bethought himself of supplying the defects of which he had been thus rendered conscious, and in the first instance made himself a covering of the skin and feathers of a dead eagle. Soon after this, the demise of his nurse the roe opened a wide field of speculation. It imparted to him the notion of the dissolution of the body, and led him to



inquire concerning the being which he conjectured must have left it—what it was, and how it subsisted—what joined it to the body, and whither it departed.

A fire having one day been accidentally kindled by collision of some reeds, our solitary obtained the advantages of light and heat in absence of the sun ; and, while trying the power of the flame by throwing substances into it, among other things he cast a piece of fish, which had been tossed on shore, and thus acquired the first rudiments of the culinary art.

Besides the covering which he had procured from the spoils of wild beasts, he made threads of their hair ; he also learned the art of building by observations on swallows' nests, and he contrived to overtake other wild beasts by taming and mounting the fleetest of their number.

The first part of the life of Ebn-Yokdhan is entertaining enough, and bears a considerable resemblance to the adventures of Robinson Crusoe ; but, after all his external wants are supplied, and he finds leisure for mental speculation, the work becomes extremely mystical, and in some places unintelligible. He, in the first place, examined the properties of all bodies in this sublunary world, as plants, minerals, &c. While contemplating the objects of nature, he conjectured that all these must have had some productive cause, and hence he acquired a general, but indefinite, idea of the Creator. From a desire to know him more distinctly, he directed his attention to the celestial bodies, of which the magnitude and movements increased his wonder and admiration. Having obtained a knowledge of the Supreme Being, he became desirous to ascertain by which of his own faculties he had comprehended this existence: He was thus led into a course of metaphysical speculation, and then of moral practice, which seems to have consisted in the adaptation of his conduct to certain far-fetched analogies with the heavenly orbs. At length he subtilized and refined to such a degree, that he excluded from his meditations, and even from his senses, all material objects ; till, immersed in contemplation of the self-existent Being, and transported beyond the limits of this world, he enjoyed in his ecstasies that beatific vision to which Quiet-

ists, German Theosophes, and other enthusiasts, in modern times, have aspired.

In this work there are, of course, many errors in theology and philosophy, as the former is Mahometan and the latter Aristotelian. The fundamental principles of the work are, that without the aids of instruction we may attain to a knowledge of all things necessary to salvation, and that in this world we may arrive, by contemplation, at an intuition of the Deity, a refined and abstract species of worship scarcely enjoyed in old times by the greatest favourites of Heaven, and of which no promise has been vouchsafed either in the Mosaic or Christian dispensation,

Many ages elapsed before any direct imitation appeared. either of the True History of Lucian, or the mystical production of Ebn-Tophail. At length, during a period when the physical theory of the world was yet unsettled, and the Cartesian hypothesis was struggling with other systems for victory, different works of this kind appeared. They served the purpose of giving an agreeable display of the topics which were then the fashionable subjects of inquiry, while their authors could throw in any new views, without risk, on the one hand, of injuring their reputation in case these views should prove erroneous, and without the danger of shocking public prejudices on the other. The *Histoire Comique des estats et empires de la Lune* of Cyrano Bergerac, and *Les estats et empires du Soleil* by the same author, appear to have had both these objects in view. I shall give some account of the first and best of these works, as it is, with much probability, supposed to have influenced Swift in his adoption of the same method of writing, and has acquired a high reputation among the compositions of this description.

Both the works of Cyrano were posthumous, and are in some parts mutilated. The first of them, *De la Lune*, was published by a Mons. de Bret, who tells us, in his preface, that the father of Cyrano, "estoit un bon vieux Gentilhomme assez indifferent pour l'education de ses enfants." He also informs us, that the young man entered into the army, and became the most famous duellist of his age, having fought more than a hundred times, without one of his rencounters having been in his own quarrel.

He was wounded at the siege of Arras in 1640, and in consequence of wounds, early dissipation, fatigue, and chagrin, died in the thirty-fifth year of his age.

The notion of writing an account of an imaginary excursion to the moon, seems partly to have been suggested by the circumstance of the lunar world having become an object of curiosity among the philosophers of the day. In contradiction to the old opinion of the peripatetics, that the moon could not be a habitable world, on account of its unchangeable nature, Gilbert (Philosoph. magnet, c. 13 and 14,) Henry Leroy and Francisco Patrizio explained at great length the appearances on which they founded an opposite system, while Hevelius, in his *Selenographia*, and Gassendi, indulged in some serio-comic speculations with regard to lunar rivers and mountains.

Hence Cyrano conceived the intention of representing, in a humorous point of view, those chimeras which some of his contemporaries had too gravely treated. To this he joined the plan of ridiculing the pedantry, the scholastic disputations of the age, and that deference to authority which was so long the bane of science. The notion of conveying this satire in the form of an imaginary excursion to the moon, was probably suggested by the Spanish work of Dominico Gonzales, of which a French translation was subsequently published, under title of *L'Homme dans la Lune, ou le Voyage Chimerique fait au Monde de la Lune, nouvellement decouvert par Dominique Gonzales Aventurier Espagnol, autrement dit le Courier Volant*. Bayle is mistaken in supposing that Bergerac was in any degree indebted to the *Voyage to Australasia*, published under the fictitious name of Jaques Sadeur. That production is no doubt a *Voyage Imaginaire*, but the two works have little resemblance, and Bergerac was dead more than twenty years before the voyage of Sadeur was written by the infamous Gabriel de Foigni.

Bergerac begins the relation of his voyage to the moon by an account of a conversation which led him to meditate on that luminary. His contemplations ended in planning some method to go thither; and, accordingly, having filled some phials with dew, he fixed them round his person, so

that the heat of the sun, by attracting the dew, raised him from the earth. He lighted in Canada, and gives us some astronomical conversations he there held with the governor. It would be needless to relate the method which he afterwards adopted to journey to the moon, in a species of elastic machine (of which the construction is not very clearly described,) or to detail the circumstances which at length rendered his flight successful. The fiction contrived by Bergerac to account for his flight, is much less happy than that of Dominico Gonzales, who feigns that he had been drawn to the moon by ganzars—birds of passage which winter in that luminary.

After a long ascent, Cyrano finds himself between two moons, of which our earth was the largest, and at length he reaches the sphere of activity of the moon, towards which his feet then turn. This does not happen till he is considerably nearer the moon than the earth, and it is curious that he uses reasoning on the occasion not unlike what would be now employed by a Newtonian.—“ Car, disois-Je en moy-mesme, cette Masse (la lune) estant moindre que la nostre, il faut que la sphere de son activité ait aussi moins d'estendüe, et que par consequent J'aye senty plus tard la force de son centre.”

At the entrance into the moon, a *hiatus* occurs in the work, of which there are several instances in the course of it, some of which perhaps were owing to the author himself, where a difficulty occurred not easily to be surmounted, and others probably to the editor, when a passage presented itself which was too free or indelicate. The beauties of the lunar country are painted with considerable felicity, though the description is not free from the affectation which was common among French authors in the days of Bergerac.—“ Là le Printemps compose toutes les saisons—là les ruisseaux par un agreable murmure racontent leurs voyages aux cailloux : là mille petits gosiers emplumez font retentir la forest au bruit de leurs melodieuses chansons ; et la tremoussante assemblée de ces divins musiciens est si generale, qu' il semble que chaque feuille dans les bois ait pris la langue et la figure d'un Rossignol—on ne sçait si les fleurs agitées par un doux

Zephire courent plutost apres elles-mesmes, qu'elles ne fuyent pour eschapper aux caresses de ce vent folatre."

After walking half a league in a forest of jessamine and myrtle, Bergerac espies a beautiful and majestic youth reposing in the shade. With this personage, who had once been an inhabitant of our world, he enters into a conversation of which we have only fragments. He is soon afterwards less fortunate, in meeting with the Aborigines of the country, who are described as huge naked men, twelve cubits high, walking on all fours. By these he is considered as a little monster, and he is consigned to a mountebank, to be exhibited, like Gulliver, as a show—"Ce Basteleur me porta a son logis, ou il m'instruisit a faire le Godenot, à passer les culbutes, à figurer des grimaces : et les après dinées il faisoit prendre a la porte un certain prix de ceux qui me vouloient voir. Mais le ciel flechy de mes douleurs, et fasché de voir prophaner le Temple de son maitre, voulut qu' un jour comme J' estois attaché au bout d'une corde, avec laquelle le Charlatan me faisoit sauter pour divertir le monde, J'entendis la voix d'un homme qui me demanda en Grec qui J' estois. Je fus bien estonné d' entendre parler en ce pais-là comme en notre monde. Il m' interrogea quelque temps ; Je luy repondis, et luy contay en suite generalement toute l'entreprise et le succes de mon voyage : il me consola, et Je me souviens qu'il me dit : Hé bien, mon fils, vous portez enfin la peine des foiblesses de vostre monde. Il y a du vulgaire icy comme là qui ne peut souffrir la pensée des choses ou il n'est point accoustumé. Mais scachez qu'on ne vous traite qu' a la pareille ; et que si quelqu' un de cette terre avoit monté dans la vostre, avec la hardiesse de se dire homme, vos sçavans le feroient estouffer comme un monstre. Il me promit en suite qu'il advertiroit la Cour de mon desastre."

This friendly personage alike disclaimed a terrestrial and lunar origin ; he informs Bergerac that originally he had been a native of the sun, which, being overstocked with inhabitants, occasionally sent out colonies to the neighbouring planets. He had, it seems, been commissioned to our earth, and in his youth had been known in Greece as the demon of Socrates. In Rome he had ad-



dicted himself to Brutus, but had at length preferred a lunar to a terrestrial residence, for which he assigns various reasons :—"C'est que les hommes y sont amateurs de la verité, qu'on n' y voit point de Pedans, que les Philosophes ne se laissent persuader qu' a la raison, et que l'autorité d'un sçavant, ny le plus grand nombre, ne l'emportent point sur l'opinion d'un bateur en grange, quand il raisonne aussi fortement. Bref en ce pais on ne conte pour insenséz que les Sophistes et les Orateurs. Je luy demanday combien de temps ils vivoient ; il me repondit trois ou quatre mille ans."

With this solar being, Bergerac enters into philosophical conversation, and several very sublime discussions ensue, which are fortunately interrupted by his friend the exhibiter. "Il en estoit là de son discours, quand mon basteleur s'apperceut que la chambrée commençoit a s' ennuyer de mon jargon qu'ils n' entendoient point, et qu'ils prenoient pour un grongnement non articulé : il se remit de plus belle a tirer ma corde pour me faire sauter jusque a ce que les spectateurs etant saouls de rire et d'asseurer que J' avois presque autant d'esprit que les bestes de leur pais, ils se retirerent chacun chez soy."

The chief inconvenience felt by Cyrano, during the first period of his lunar residence, was the want of provisions, for the inhabitants of the moon live by the odour of savoury viands ; a mode of subsistence also attributed to them in the True History of Lucian, which evinces our author's imitation of the works of the Grecian satirist. Cyrano, however, at last succeeds in making them understand, that something more substantial than the mere steam or exhalations of feasts was necessary for his subsistence.

At length Cyrano was conducted to court by the friendly demon, where, after much reasoning, it was concluded that he was the female of the queen's little animal, who, in consequence was ordered to be introduced to him. Accordingly, in the midst of a procession of monkeys in full dress, a little man arrived. "Il m' aborda," says Bergerac, "par un *Criado de vouestra merced* ; Je luy riposté sa reverence a peu pres en mesme termes." This gentleman was Dominico Gonzales, the Castilian, who

had travelled thither with the Ganzars; and this circumstance, by the way, is a proof that the work of Gonzales was the prototype of that of Cyrano, as his was evidently of Gulliver's voyage to Brobdignag. Dominico had immediately on his arrival been classed in the category of monkeys, as he happened to be clothed in the Spanish mode, which the inhabitants of the moon had fixed on for the fashionable attire of their monkeys, as the most ridiculous, which, after long meditation, they had found it possible to devise. Cyrano being considered by the lunar sages as the female of the same class of monkeys of which Dominico was the male, they were confined together, and have long and pretty tiresome discourses concerning elementary principles, the possibility of a vacuum, and other investigations, which were fashionable subjects of discussion among philosophical inquirers in the days of Bergerac. "Voilà," says he, "les choses a peu pres dont nous amusions le temps: car ce petit Espagnol avoit l'esprit joly. Nostre entretien toute fois n'estoit que la nuit, a cause que depuis six heures du matin jusques au soir, la grande foule du monde qui nous venoit contempler a nostre logis nous eust destourné; Car quelques-un nous jettoient des pierres, d'autres des noix, d'autres de l'herbe: Il n'estoit bruit que des bestes du Roy, on nous servoit tous les jours a manger a nos heures, et le Roy et la reine prenoient eux-mesmes assez souvent la peine de me taster le ventre pour connoistre si Je n'emplissois point, car ils bruloient d'une envie extraordinaire d'avoir de la race de ces petits animaux. Je ne sçais si ce fut pour avoir esté plus attentif que mon masle a leurs simagrées et a leurs tons, mais J'appris plustost que luy a entendre leur langue, et a l'escorcher un peu."

The circumstance of Cyrano acquiring some knowledge of the language of the country, instead of being favourable to him, exposed him to inconvenience and persecution, as some free-thinkers began to allege that he was endued with reason. This was most furiously opposed by the more orthodox and accredited sages, who maintained that it was not only foolish, but a most horrid impiety, to suppose that a creature which did not walk on all fours, could be possessed of any species of mental intelligence. "Nous

autres," argued they, "marchons a quatre pieds, parce que Dieu ne se voulut pas fier d'une chose si precieuse a une moïn ferme assiette, et il eut peur qu' allant autrement il n' arrivast malheur a l' homme, c'est pourquoy il prit la peine de l' asseoir sur quatre piliers, afin qu' il ne pût tomber : mais dedaignant de se mesler de la construction de ces deux brutes, il les abandonna au caprice de la Nature, laquelle ne craignant pas la perte de si peu de chose, ne les appuya que sur deux pattes."

But the principal argument against the rationality of Cyrano and his male, and on which the lunar sages particularly piqued themselves, was, that these animals possessed the *Os Sublime*, which the sages of our earth, in their discussions against quadrupeds, rightly consider as a pledge of immortality : "Voyez un peu outre cela," continued the lunar philosophers, "comment ils (Cyrano and the Spaniard) ont la teste tournée devers le Ciel : C'est la disette ou Dieu les a mis de toutes choses, qui l' a scitué de la sorte, car cette posture supliante temoigne qu'ils se plaignent au ciel de celuy qui les a creez, et qu' ils luy demandent permission de s' accommoder de nos restes. Mais nous autres nous avons la teste panchée en bas pour contempler les biens dont nous sommes seigneurs, et comme n' y ayant rien au ciel a qui notre heureuse condition puisse porter envie."

The result of the philosophical conferences concerning Cyrano was, that he must be a bird,—a discovery on which the sages greatly plumed themselves; he was accordingly inclosed in a cage, and intrusted to the queen's fowler, who employed himself in teaching his charge as we do linnets. Under this person's auspices, the progress of Cyrano was such, that the disputes concerning his rationality were renewed, and the consequence was, that those sages who defended the orthodox side of the question, having considerably the worse of the argument, were obliged—"de faire publier un Arrest par lequel on defendoit de croire que J' eusse de la raison, avec un commandement tres-expres a toutes personnes de quelque qualité qu' elles fussent, de s' imaginer, quoy que Je pusse faire de spirituel, que c' estoit l' instinct qui me le faisoit faire."

To those who are acquainted with the history of philosophy, and the state of opinions in the days of Bergerac, there will appear considerable merit in the satire which has just been exhibited. The supporters of the systems of Aristotle had at one time (ridiculous as it may seem) procured an *Arret* at Paris to prevent his doctrines being contested; and some of his admirers, enraged at the shock which Descartes, Gassendi, and other philosophers in France at this time gave to his opinions, were desirous of resorting to a similar expedient.

In spite, however, of the Lunar *Arret*, the controversy grew so warm, that, as a last resource, Cyrano was ordered to appear before an assembly of the states, in order to judge of his rational powers. The examiners interrogated him on some points of philosophy, and refuted the opinions which he expressed in his answers, “de sorte que n’ y pouvant repondre, J’ alleguay pour dernier refuge les principes d’ Aristote, qui ne me servirent pas davantage que les Sophismes, car en deux mots ils m’ en decouvirent la fausseté. Cet Aristote me dirent ils, dont vous vantez si fort la science accommodoit sans doute les principes a sa Philosophie, au lieu d’ accomoder sa Philosophie aux principes. Enfin comme ils virent que Je ne leur clabaudois autre chose, sinon qu’ ils n’ estoient pas plus sçavans qu’ Aristote, et qu’ on m’ avoit defendu de disputer contre ceux qui nioient les principes ; ils conclurent tous d’ une commune voix, que Je n’ estois pas un homme, mais possible quelque espece d’ Austruche, si bien qu’ on ordonna a l’ Oyseleur de me reporter en cage. J’ y passois mon temps avec assez de plaisir, car a cause de leur langue que Je possedois correctement, toute la cour se divertissoit a me faire jaser. Les Filles de la Reine entr’ autres fouroient toudjours quelque bribe dans mon panier ; et la plus la gentille de toutes ayant conceu quelque amitié pour moy, elle estoit si transportée de joye, lorsqu’ estant en secret, Je l’ entretenois des moeurs et des divertissemens des gens de nostre Monde, et principalement de nos cloches, et de nos autres instruments de musique, qu’ elle me protestoit les larmes aux yeux que si jamais Je me trouvois en estat de revoler en nostre Monde, elle me suivroit de bon coeur.”

This lady continues to manifest much attachment to Cyrano, and her affection reminds us of the love of the fair Glumdalclitch for Gulliver in Brobdignag.

At length, his friend, the demon of Socrates, procures the deliverance of Cyrano, who now narrowly escapes being condemned to death for impiety, in maintaining that our earth was not merely a moon, but an inhabited world. This had been oppugned with so much zeal, and so many good arguments by the sages, that Cyrano, in revenge, asserted that he had come to opine that their earth was not an earth but a moon.—“ Mais me dirent-ils tous, vous y voyez de la terre, des rivières, des mers, que seroit-ce donc tout cela ? N’importe, repartis Je, Aristote assure que ce n’est que la Lune ; et si vous aviez dit le contraire dans les classes où J’ay fait mes études, on vous auroit sifflé. Il se fit sur cela un grand éclat de rire, il ne faut pas demander si ce fut de leur ignorance : Mais cependant on me conduisit dans ma cage.” In fine, previous to his deliverance from this second confinement, Cyrano was obliged to make an *amende*, and to proclaim publicly in the principal parts of the city,—“ Peuple, Je vous declare que cette Lune-cy n’est pas une Lune, mais un Monde, et que ce Monde de la bas n’est pas un Monde, mais une Lune. Tel est ce que le Conseil trouve bon que vous croyez.”

After the deliverance of Bergerac, we are presented with a number of philosophical disquisitions which he held with the demon and his friends. Among other topics, the arrival of a person of quality, decked out in a particular manner, gives rise to a discussion, which has been seized upon by Sterne :—“ Cette coustume me semble bien extraordinaire, repartis-Je, car en nostre monde la marque de noblesse est de porter une Espée. Mais l’Hoste sans s’emouvoir : O mon petit homme, s’ecria-t’il, quoy les grands de vostre monde sont si enragez de fair parade d’un instrument qui designe un boureau, et qui n’est forgé que pour nous détruire, enfin l’ennemy juré de tout ce qui vit ; et de cacher au contraire ce sans qui nous serions au rang de ce qui n’est pas, le Prométhée de chaque animal, et le réparateur infatigable des foiblesses de la nature. Mal-



heureuse contrée, où les marques de generation sont ignominieuses, et ou celles d'aneantissement sont honorables.”\*

At length Cyrano, after performing a tour of the moon, is conducted from that luminary to earth, in the arms of the demon, who places him on the acclivity of a hill, and disappears. Some Italian peasants, whom he meets, cross themselves in great terror, but at length conduct him to a village. Here he is assailed by a prodigious barking of dogs, who, smelling the odour of the moon, against which they were accustomed to bark, keep up an incessant clamour. By walking a few days on a terrace in the sun, in order to purify himself of the smell, Cyrano forms a truce with his canine foes, visits Rome, and at length arrives at Marseilles.

Such is the abstract of the *Histoire Comique des Etats et Empire de la Lune*, a work which, like all those of which the satire is in any degree temporary, has lost a good deal of its first relish. It is, however, still worthy of perusal, especially by those who are acquainted with the philosophical history of the period in which it was composed: and the interest which it excites must, to an English reader, be increased by its having served in many respects as a prototype to the most popular production of a writer so celebrated as Swift. Nor has it only directed the plan of the Dean of St. Patrick's work; since even in the summary of the Lunar Voyage that has been presented, many points of resemblance will at once be discerned to the journey to Brobdignag. Gulliver is beset, at his first landing on that strange country, by a number of the inhabitants, who are of similar dimensions with the people of the moon, and who are astonished at his diminutive stature he is exhibited as a sight at one of the principal towns—he amuses the spectators with various mountebank tricks

\* This is probably intended as a satire on a passage in Charron's work *Sur La Sagesse*:—"Helas on choisit les tenebres, on se cache, on ne se livre qu' a la derobée au plaisir de produire son semblable; au lieu qu' on le detruit en plein jour, en sonnant la trompette en remplissant l' air de fanfares! Il n' est pas honnête de s' entretenir de certaines choses tandis qu' on parle avec orgueil d' uu sabre et d' un pique; et ce qui sert a tuer l' homme est une marque de noblesse—on dore on enrichit une épée, on s' en pare."

—and acquires an imperfect knowledge of the language— afterwards he is carried to court, where he is introduced to the queen's favourite dwarf, and where great disputes arise concerning the species to which he belongs, among the chief scholars, whose speculations are ridiculed in a manner extremely similar to the reasonings of the lunar sages. The general turn of wit and humour is besides the same, and seems to be of a description almost peculiar to these two writers. The Frenchman, indeed, wanted the advantages of learning and education possessed by his successor, and hence his imagination was, perhaps, less guarded and correct; in many respects, however, it is more agreeably extravagant, and his ærial excursion is free from what is universally known to be the chief objections to the satire contained in the four voyages of Gulliver.

As Cyrano's Journey to the Moon is the origin of Swift's Brobdignag, so the *Histoire des Estats du Soleil* seems to have suggested the plan of the Voyage to Laputa. This second expedition of Cyrano is much inferior in merit to his former one, but, like the third excursion of Gulliver, is in a great measure intended to expose the vain pursuits of schemers and projectors in learning and science.

From an imitation, probably of the works of Bergerac, many of the *Voyages Imaginaires*, which appeared in France during the first half of the 18th century, described excursions through the heavenly bodies. *Les Voyages de Milford Ceton*, by Marie Anne de Roumier, is the account of an English nobleman, who, during the disturbances of his own country in the time of Cromwell, is metamorphosed into a fly, and in that shape is carried by a friendly genius through the moon and seven planets. The author accommodates the character of the inhabitants of each star to the name it bears on earth. Venus is the centre of amatory indulgence, and Mercury the abode of avarice and fraud. By this means there is conveyed a general satire on different vices; and a ridicule of individuals addicted to the predominant passion in the planet seems also to have been occasionally intended.

There are also some imaginary expeditions through the interior of the earth, the most celebrated of which, next to the *Mundus Subterraneus* of Kircher, is the *Lamekis* of

the Chevalier Mouhy, which comprehends an account of the sectaries of Serapis, who retired from the rest of the world to the centre of the globe, that, in this seclusion, they might celebrate their mysteries in uninterrupted tranquillity. The work is much in the style of an oriental tale; it is full of marvels, and displays much richness of imagination.

Connected with these wonderful expeditions, there is a species of allegorical travels into imaginary countries, feigned to be the particular residence of some peculiar passion or folly. Of this sort is the *Voyage de l' Isle d' Amour, Du Royaume de Coqueterie, &c.* The best work of the kind I have seen, is *Le Voyage de Prince Fan-Feredin dans la Romancie*. It is the description of an ideal kingdom, filled with chimerical productions, and peopled with inhabitants of whimsical or factitious manners, and is on the whole an excellent criticism on the improbable scenes and unnatural manners with which so many writers of romance have stuffed their productions. Thus, some rocks which Fan-Feredin passes on his journey, are represented as soft as velvet, having been melted the day before by the complaints of a lover. A great part of the satire is directed against the *Cleveland*, and *Mémoires d'un Homme de Qualité*, by the Abbé Prevot. It was written by the Jesuit Guillaume Bougeant, who died in 1743, and who was distinguished by various historical and satiric compositions.

To the above-mentioned classes of *Voyages Imaginaires*, may be associated works resembling the *Sentimental Journey*, where the country is real, but the incidents of the journey imaginary. The earliest and most esteemed of these productions is the *Voyage de Chapelle*, where a journey is performed through different provinces of France. This work, which was written about the middle of the 17th century, served as the model of Fontaine's *Voyage de Paris en Limousin*, the *Voyage de Languedoc*, and a number of similar compositions, many of which, like their model, are partly written in prose, and partly in verse.

The class of *Songes et Visions* resembles the *Voyages Imaginaires*, and only differs from them in this, that the body is in repose while the mind ranges through the whole

chimerical world. These productions are of a more fugitive nature, as their duration is limited, than the *Voyages Imaginaires*, but they are also less unnatural, since nothing is too extravagant to be presented to the imagination, when the eye of reason is closed with that of the body. Of this species of writing, some beautiful examples have been transmitted by antiquity. In modern times, the earliest is the *Laberinto d'Amore* of the celebrated Boccaccio, which was the model of similar French compositions.

This production was followed by the *Polifilo*, or *Hypernotomachia*, written in Italian in 1647 by Francesco Colonna, who, being a priest, is said to have thus allegorically described his passion for a nun called Lucretia Maura. In this vision Polifilo is a lover, who imagines himself conducted in a dream by his mistress Polia through the temples, tombs, and antiquities of Greece and Egypt. They are at length carried in a bark by Cupid to the island of Cythera, which is beautifully described, and there behold the festivals of Venus and commemoration of Adonis : the Nymphs prevail on Polia to relate her story, and when it is concluded Polifilo is awakened by the song of the nightingale. This work is full of mysteries, of which Polia is the interpreter, but the mysteries are not always the clearer for her interpretation.

The *Hypernotomachia* was translated into French at an early period, under the title of *Songe de Poliphile*, and was probably the model of similar compositions, which became very prevalent in France during the period on which we are now engaged.

In *Les Songes d'un Hermite*, the different states of society and occupations of individuals pass in review before a recluse, and he finds nothing in them all to induce him to quit his solitude.

In *Les Songes et Visions Philosophiques* de Mercier, the author feigns, that while returning from the country to Paris, he arrived at a small inn. Here he met an interesting woman, who had made an unfortunate love marriage. While relating her story, she is surprised and delighted by the arrival of her husband, whom she had regarded as lost. The story the author had heard, and the scene he had witnessed, lead him to ruminate on the sor-

rows and pleasures of love, which form the subject of his first dream, as the impressions that had been made continued after he dropped asleep. Nature holds up to him a mirror, in which he sees represented the effects and influence of that passion in different states of society, the impulse it gives to the savage, and the tameness of domestic happiness in civilized society, to which the author seems to prefer the gratifications of the Indian. His second vision relates to war, and is raised by a perusal of the celebrated treatise of Grotius. The dreamer is carried to a valley, where Justice comes to decide on the fate of conquerors and heroes. Here the shades of Alexander, Tamerlane, and other warriors, pass before him, and are judged according to their deserts.

The Romans Cabalistiques form the last species of this division of fiction, which it will be necessary to mention. For many ages the mysteries of the Cabalistic philosophy were subjects of belief and investigation in France. The ends at which its votaries aimed, were the transmutation of metals, and the composition of the Elixir of life, supposed to be the quintessence of the four elements, which, according to this fantastic creed, were inhabited or governed by Sylphs, Undinas, Gnomes, and Salamanders. The vain researches of the cabalists, however, produced some discoveries in experimental physics, and the more ornamental part of their system has suggested the machinery of the most elegant poem in our language.

About the middle of the seventeenth century, when the partisans of this philosophy were hardly yet laughed out of countenance, the Abbé Villars undertook to expose its absurdities in a satire entitled *Le Comte de Gabalis, ou Entretiens sur les sciences secretes*, a work which was very popular in France, and perhaps instrumental in discrediting the reveries which it ridiculed. Its author feigns that he was acquainted with a number of philosophers who prosecuted the study of the occult sciences, and was employed to correspond in their name with the Count Gabalis, a celebrated German adept, who was expected in a short time to visit Paris. The count is much prepossessed in his favour by the letters he received, and, on coming to Paris immediately waits on his correspondent, whom he finds en-



dued with such excellent dispositions for the reception of his doctrines, that he resolves to develope to him the whole Arcana of the Rosicrucian science. Previous, however, to this initiation, he enjoins, as requisite to the successful prosecution of his studies, a renunciation, which, if really as essential as the adept describes, satisfactorily accounts for the little progress that has been made in the Cabalistic arts. As a compensation, the disciple is promised the most familiar acquaintance with the elementary spirits, and he of course feels deeply interested concerning their attributes. This introduces the ensuing conversations, which relate to sylphs, undinas, &c., and the nature of their intercourse with the children of men. The whole system of Sylphs and Gnomes had been originally unfolded by Paracelsus. But the Abbé Villars has chiefly followed *La Chiave del Gabinetto*, a work attributed to the Signor Giuseppe Francisco Borri, a Milanese impostor, who, being forced to leave his own country on account of his dissolute life and heretical opinions, travelled through Europe, imposing on the credulous by a pretended knowledge of cabalistic secrets. During his life a series of letters were printed, under the title of *Chiave del Gabinetto*, which were pretended to have been written by Borri, but which, in fact, only contain a record of his supposed secrets and opinions. The two first letters give an account of a conversation held between Borri and a Danish cabalist with regard to elementary beings. The others disclose the secrets concerning transmutation of metals, the perpetual mobile, &c.

The Comte Gabalis, was followed by a number of tales relating to elementary beings. In *Les Ondins*, a princess escapes from the power of a magician, by whom she is persecuted. She arrives at the sea-shore, and in a fit of despair at her forlorn situation, plunges into the deep, where she is hospitably received by the undinas, whose palace and empire are magnificently described.

*L'Amant Salamandre* is the story of an interested governess, who, in order to procure an establishment for a son, resolves to bring her pupil, a young lady of beauty and fortune, into a situation which will compel her to form this unequal alliance. With this view she leads her to

despise the human species, and to sigh for beings of a superier order, as alone worthy of her virtues and accomplishments. Her thoughts are thus turned towards an intercourse with elementary spirits, and her ruin is finally completed by the introduction of the young man, invested with the imposing attributes of a salamander.

Les Lutins de Chateau de Kernosy is the work of Madame Murat, so well known by her fairy tales. The enchantments here, also, are fictitious, and performed by pretended magicians in order to accomplish their purpose. Two lovers, with the view of facilitating their introduction into a castle inhabited by their mistresses, contrive to pass for elementary spirits, deceive the vigilance of a severe and antiquated duenna, and get rid of their rivals, who are two awkward and credulous rustics.

Herodotus, the father of history, tells us of men who at particular seasons changed themselves into wolves, and we are informed in the 8th eclogue of Virgil that Mœris was often detected in this disguise. Solinus also mentions a people of Istria who possessed the same enviable privilege. The notion, doubtless, had its foundation in the imposition of pretended sorcerers, who laid claim to a power of effecting this transformation, and perhaps, to aid the deception, disguised themselves in wolves' skins. The belief, however, in this faculty left a name behind it in every country of Europe. He who enjoyed it was called Garwalf by the Normans, and Bisclaveret by the Bretons, which is the name of one of the Armorican lays of Marie. It contains the story of a baron, whose wife perceiving that her husband was invariably absent during three days of the week, interrogated him so closely on the cause of his periodical disappearance, that she at length reduced him to the mortifying acknowledgment that during one half of the week he prowled as a bisclaveret; and she also extracted from him a secret, which enabled her to confirm his metamorphosis. From a passage in the Origines Gauloises, by La Tour d'Auvergne, it would appear that a belief in this species of transformation continued long in Britany. "Dans l'opinion des Bretons, ces memes hommes se revetent, pendant la nuit, de peaux de Loups, et en prennent quelquefois la forme, pour se trouver a des assem-

bléés ou le demon est supposé presider. Ce que l' on dit ici des deguisements et des courses nocturnes de ces pretendus hommes loups, dont l' espece n' est pas encore entierement eteinte dans l' ancienne Armorique, nous rapelle ce que l' histoire rapporte des Lycantrophes d' Irlande." In Ireland, indeed, this superstition probably subsisted longer than in any other country. "In some parts of France," says Sir William Temple in his *Miscellanea*, "the common people once believed certainly there were Lougaroos, or men turned into wolves; and I remember several Irish of the same mind."

Under this name of *Loups-Garoux*, those persons who enjoyed this agreeable faculty have been introduced into several French tales, and other works of fiction, during the period on which we are now employed. These productions have been very happily ridiculed in *L'Histoire des Imaginations* de M. Oufle, by the Abbé Bardelon. This work is partly written on the model of *Don Quixote*, and contains the story of a credulous and indolent man, who, having read nothing but marvellous tales, believes, at length, in the existence of sorcerers, demons, and *loup-garoux*. He first imagines that he is persecuted by a spirit, then alternately fancies himself a magician and *loup-garou*, and devotes his time to the discovery of a mode of penetrating into the thoughts of men, and attracting the affections of women.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

Sketch of the Origin and Progress of the English Novel—Serious—Conic—Romantic—Conclusion.

IT will have been remarked, that the account of the modern French tales and novels has been much less minute than the analysis of those fictitious histories by which they were preceded. To this compression of the subject, I have been led partly by the variety, and partly by the notoriety

of the more recent productions. In the early periods of literature, works of fiction were rare, and thus it was comparatively easy to enumerate and describe them. But during last century, the number of fictitious writings, both in France and England, was so great, that as full an account of them as of those which appeared in former times, would occupy many volumes. Such analysis is likewise the less necessary or proper, since, when works of fiction become so very numerous and varied, they cease to be characteristic of the age in which they were produced. In former periods, when readers were few, and when only one species of fiction appeared at a time, it was easy to judge what were the circumstances which gave birth to it, and to which it gave birth in turn. But in later times, not only an infinite number of works, but works of different kinds, have sprung up at once; and thus were no longer expressive of the taste and feelings of the period of their composition. Above all, what renders a minute analysis unnecessary is, that the works themselves are known to most readers, and, consequently, a detailed account of them would be altogether superfluous. Abstracts may be presented on occasions where the original is little known, and abounds in long details, but they are perfectly unsuitable and improper when the whole novel is concisely and elegantly composed. In this case the value of the original consists less in the story itself than in the style and sentiments and colouring—in short, in a variety of circumstances, which in an analysis or abridgment totally evaporate and disappear.

Such views have prevented me from entering into detail concerning the French, and they apply still more forcibly to the English novel. What could be more insufferable than an analysis of *Tom Jones*, and how feeble would be the idea which it would convey of the original? Accordingly I shall confine myself to a very short and general survey of the works of English fiction.

We have already seen that, during the reigns of our Henrys and Edwards, the English nation was chiefly entertained with the fables of chivalry. The French romances concerning Arthur and his knights continued to be the most popular productions during the rule of the

Plantagenet monarchs. In the time of Edward IV. the fictions of chivalry were represented in an English garb in the *Morte Arthure*, which is a compilation from the most celebrated French romances of the Round Table; while, at the same period, the romantic inventions concerning the history of Troy and classical heroes were translated and printed by the indefatigable Caxton. *Artus de la Bretagne* and *Huon of Bourdeaux* were *done* into English by Lord Berners in the reign of Henry VIII., and continued, along with the *Morte Arthure*, to be the chief delight of our ancestors during the sway of the family of Tudor. In the age of Queen Elizabeth, the Spanish romances concerning *Amadis* and *Palmerin* were translated, and a few imitations of the romances of chivalry were also written in English. Of this class of fiction, the "Famous, delectable, and pleasaunt Hystorie of the renowned Parismus, Prince of Bohemia," may be regarded as a representative. This work, written by Emanuel Ford, and printed 1598, was so popular in its day, that the thirteenth edition, in black letter, is now before me. It is principally formed on the model of the Spanish romances, particularly on *Palmerin d'Oliva*.

The *Ornatus* and *Artesia*, also by Emanuel Ford, and the *Pheander*, or *Maiden Knight*, written by Henry Roberts, and printed in 1595, belong to the same class of composition. By this time, however, the genuine spirit of chivalry had evaporated, and these productions present but a feeble image of the doughty combats and daring adventures of *Lancelot* or *Tristan*. A new state of society and manners had sprung up, and hence the nation eagerly received those innumerable translations and imitations of the Italian tales, which, being now widely diffused by means of *Paynter's Palace of Pleasure*, *Whetstone's Heptameron*, and *Grimstone's Admirable Histories*, supplied to the higher class of English readers that species of entertainment which their ancestors had formerly derived from the *Recuyell* of the *Hystories* of *Troye* and the *Legends* of *Arthur*. The exploits of chivalry—the atrocities and intrigues of the Italian tales, are now alike neglected; and while such works as those of *Richardson* and *Fielding* interpose between, they can scarcely be regarded by the



present age or posterity. Yet it should not be forgotten that the images and characters of chivalry bestowed additional richness and variety on the luxuriant fancy of Spenser, while the incidents of the Italian tales supplied materials even for the inexhaustible imagination of Shakespeare, and gave birth to that peculiar turn of tragic as well as comic interest adopted by the most numerous and noble race of our dramatic poets.

While the English nation, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, were chiefly amused with the fading remains of romances of chivalry, and the earliest imitations of Italian tales, there was invented, during the same period, a new species of novel, written in a style of bad taste and affectation, to which there had been hitherto no parallel, and of which it is to be hoped there will never be an imitation. The first work of this description was the *Euphues* of John Lylye, who was born in 1553 in the Wolds of Kent. At an early age he went to court, where he was patronised by Queen Elizabeth, and hoped to be preferred to the situation of Master of the Revels; but after an attendance of many years, he was finally disappointed. While at the English court he wrote his romance of *Euphues*, which some persons have erroneously imagined to be intended as a satire on the phraseology of the court ladies during the reign of Elizabeth. *Euphues*, however, seems perfectly a serious production, and its author had either the bad taste to adopt in composition the absurd style of conversation which was then in vogue, or, what is more probable, the popularity of his work introduced an affected jargon among the *Precieuses Ridicules* of the age, in the same manner as the romances of Mad. Scuderi brought the long and inflated compliments of her characters into fashion:—

Deux nobles campagnards, grands lecteurs des Romans,  
M'ont dit tout Cyrus dans leurs longs complimens.

*Boileau.*

The work of Lylye, which was published about 1580, is divided into two parts, of which the first is entitled *Euphues*, and the second *Euphues and his England*. In the beginning of this production we are told that *Euphues*,

an Athenian gentleman, distinguished for the elegance of his person and beauty of his wit, his amorous temperament and roving disposition, arrived at the court of Naples, "which was rather the Tabernacle of Venus than the Temple of Vesta, and more meet for an atheist than one of Athens." Here Euphues forms a friendship with Philautus, a Neapolitan gentleman, who carries him to sup at the house of his mistress Lucilla, or the gentlewoman, as she is called through the romance, where he is so coldly received that he inquires if it be the guise of Italy to welcome strangers with strangeness. In spite of this unfavourable reception, Euphues becomes deeply enamoured of Lucilla, and after supper requests leave to give a discourse on the topic, whether love is most excited by the perfections of mind or beauties of form. Lucilla is so captivated with the eloquence of Euphues in treating this delicate subject, that "for his sake she forsakes Philautus." After this there is little incident in the romance, but many intricate discourses between Euphues and his new mistress, particularly on constancy in love, the existence of which Euphues attempts to demonstrate, by reminding her "that though the rust fret the hardest steel, yet doth it not eat the emerald; though the polypus change his hue, yet the salamander keepeth his colour." To all this Lucilla replies by treating him in the same manner as she had formerly used Philautus. These unfortunate lovers are now reconciled, and Euphues writes his "Cooling Card to Philautus, and all fond Lovers." He then returns to Athens, whence he transmits several letters to his Neapolitan friend, and also a system of education which he drew up, and entitled Euphues and his Ephæbus.

In the commencement of the second part, Euphues, having joined Philautus, sets out on a voyage to England. The episodical story of the hermit, which he hears on this passage, is excellent, and the advice of the recluse to his family reminds us of that perfect specimen of worldly wisdom exhibited in the Instructions of Lord Burleigh to his Son. After the arrival of Euphues in England, we are presented with some curious details concerning the manners and government of that country in the age of Queen Elizabeth. On reaching London, Philautus having fallen

in love with a lady called Camilla, consults a magician how he may win her affections; and he, of course, cannot do this without relating all the examples of vehement passion recorded in ancient history and mythology. The magician is as learned on the subject of philtres, but concludes, "that though many there have been so wicked as to seek such meanes, yet was there never any so unhappy as to find them." Philautus being thus disappointed, sends Camilla an amatory letter inclosed in a mulberry, which having failed to gain her love, he transmits a second, in which he threatens suicide, and subscribes himself—"Thine ever, though shortly never."

At this crisis Euphues is recalled by letters to Athens, whence he transmits to Italy, for use of the Neapolitan ladies, what he calls "Euphues' Glass for Europe," a flattering description of England, which he considers as the mirror in which other countries should dress themselves. This, of course, contains an encomiastic representation of the court—the beauty, talents, and, above all, the chastity of Queen Elizabeth, and the virtues of Englishwomen, "who do not, like the Italian ladies, drink wine before they rise, to increase their colour." Philautus now reports by letter that he had married the lady Flavia, who, it will be recollected, was his third mistress. "Euphues then gave himself to solitariness, determining to sojourn in some uncouth place; and this order he left with his friends, that if any news came or letters, that they should direct them to the Mount of Selexsedra, where I leave him, either to his musing or muses."

In the romance of Euphues there are chiefly three faults, which indeed pervade all the novels of the same school. 1. A constant antithesis, not merely in the ideas, but words, as one more given to *theft* than to *threft*. 2. An absurd affectation of learning, by constant reference to history and mythology. 3. A ridiculous superabundance of similitudes: Lylie is well characterized by Drayton, as always

Talking of stones, stars, planets, fishes, flies,  
Playing with words and idle similies.

Thus, in the very commencement of the work, the author, moralizing on the elegance and accomplishments of his hero, remarks, "that freshest colours soonest fade—the keenest razor soonest turns his edge—the finest cloth is soonest eaten with moths, and the cambrick sooner stained than the coarse canvas." The same style is preserved in the most impassioned letters and conversations in the work. Philautus, writing to Euphues, who had just deprived him of the affections of his mistress, compares his rival, in the course of a single page, to musk, the cedar tree, a swallow, bee, and spider; while perfect friendship is likened to the glow-worm, frankincense, and the damask rose. As a specimen of the amorous dialect of the romance, Lucilla, after reminding her admirers that there are more dangers in love than hares in Athos, runs over all the examples of antiquity in which ladies had been deceived by strangers, as Dido, Ariadne, &c. "It is common and lamentable," she continues, "to behold simplicity entrapped in subtilty, and those that have most might to be infected with most malice. The spider weaveth the fine web to hang the fly—the wolfe weareth a faire face to devour the lamb—the merlin striketh at the partridge—the eagle snappeth at the fly \* \* \* \*. I have read that the bull being tied to the fig-tree loseth his strength—that the whole herd of deer stand at the gaze if they smell a sweet apple—that the dolphin by the sound of musick is brought to shore. And then no marvell it is if the wilde decre be caught with an apple, that the tame damosell is wonne with a blossom—if the fleet dolphin be allured with harmony, that women be entangled with the melody of men's speech."

Notwithstanding its bad taste and affectation, or perhaps in consequence of them, Euphues was in the highest vogue at the period of its composition, particularly among the court ladies, who had all the phrases by heart. Blount, the editor of six of Lyly's comedies, informs us that all the ladies of that time were his scholars; she who spoke not Euphuism being as little regarded at court as if she could not speak French. Ben Jonson often makes his ladies quote Euphues. Thus Fallace, in *Every Man out of his Humour*, (act v. scene x.) "O, Master Brisk, as 'tis said

in Euphues, Hard is the choice, when one is compelled either by silence to die with grief, or by speaking to live with shame."

Unfortunately, Lylie had not merely admirers, but, as was naturally to be expected from his popularity, many imitators. Of these, one of the earliest was Lodge, author of *Rosalynd, or Euphues' Golden Legacy*, a production printed in 1590, and chiefly curious as being the origin of one of Shakspeare's most celebrated dramas. Part of Lodge's novel was probably taken from the Coke's Tale of Gamelyn, which was written by a contemporary of Chaucer, and has by some been erroneously attributed to that father of English poetry. Gamelyn, the younger son of Sir Johan de Boundis, was deprived of his inheritance and scurvily treated by his elder brother, who, among other things, persuaded him to wrestle with a doughty champion, hoping that he would be destroyed in the combat. In all his misfortunes Gamelyn received much commiseration from *Adam*, the old steward of his deceased father, by whose assistance he at length escaped from the cruelty of his brother, and arrived, with his preserver, at a forest, where he sees a band of outlaws seated at a repast, and is conducted by them to their king. Lodge's *Rosalynd*, in its turn has suggested almost the whole plot of *As You Like It*, in which Shakspeare has not merely borrowed the story, but sketched several of the principal characters, and copied several speeches and expressions from the novel. The phrase "weeping tears," used by the clown, (act ii. scene iv.) and the whole description given by Oliver (act iv. scene iii.) of Orlando discovering him in the forest while in danger from the lion and serpent, is copied from Lodge's *Rosalynd*. A song in the second scene of the fourth act, beginning

What shall he have killed that deer?—  
His leather skin and horns to wear, &c.

is from a passage in Lodge:—"What newes, forrester? hast thou wounded some deere and lost him in the fall? Care not, man, for so small a loss—thy fee was but the skinne and the hornes." Lodge's work also contains



verses which indicate some poetical taste and feeling, and which have not been neglected by Shakspeare in the poetry and songs with which he has interspersed his delightful drama. The characters, however, of the Clown and Audrey are of his own invention, as also that of Jaques, who fills the background of the scene with a gloomy sensibility, like the *Paelida Mors* in the festive odes of Horaçe. The catastrophe of the piece is also considerably altered. Shakspeare, as is remarked by his commentators, appears to have been in great haste to conclude *As You Like It*. In Lodge, the elder brother is instrumental in saving Aliena from a band of ruffians, "who thought to steal her away, and to give her to the king for a present, hoping by such gifte to purchase all their pardons." Without the intervention, of this circumstance, the passion of Celia (under name of Aliena) appears to be very hasty. It was conceived for a person of unamiable disposition, of whose reformation she had just heard, and whom she had only known at her father's court as remarkable for a churlish disposition, and his illiberal treatment of a younger brother. Finally, in Lodge's novel the usurping Duke is not diverted from his purpose by the pious counsels of a hermit, but is subdued and killed by the twelve peers of France, who were brought by the third brother of Rosader to assist him in the recovery of his right. This incident, of course, could not have been well introduced into a drama; but even in that which Shakspeare has adopted in its place, he has suppressed, while hurrying to a conclusion, the dialogue between the usurper and hermit, "and thus lost," as Dr. Johnson has remarked, "an opportunity of exhibiting a moral lesson, in which he might have found matter worthy of his highest powers. He has also forgot old Adam, the servant of Sir Rowland de Boyes, whose fidelity should have entitled him to some notice and reward, and whom Lodge, at the conclusion of his novel, makes captain of the king's guard."

Shakspeare has likewise been indebted for the plot of his *Winter's Tale* to another novel of the same school—*The Pleasant History of Dorastus and Fawnia*, by R. Greene, an author equally remarkable for his genius and profligacy. It was at one time supposed that the novel

was founded on the play, but Dr. Farmer discovered a copy of *Dorastus and Fawnia* printed in 1588, which was previous to the composition of the *Winter's Tale*. Our great dramatist, however, has changed all the names. His Leontes, King of Sicily, is called Egistus in the novel; Polyxenes, King of Bohemia, is there named Pandosto; Mamillius, Prince of Sicily, Garinter; and Hermione, Bel-laria: Florizel is Greene's Dorastus, and Perdita his Fawnia. Shakspeare has also added the characters of Antigonus, Paulina, and Autolycus. In the principal part of the plot he has servilely followed the novel. The oracle, in the second scene of the third act, is copied from it, and in various passages he has merely versified its language. Thus the lines,

The gods themselves,  
Humbling their deities to love, have taken  
The shapes of beasts upon them: Jupiter  
Became a bull, and bellowed; the green Neptune,  
A ram, and bleated; and the fire-robed god,  
Golden Apollo, a poor humble swain,  
As I am now,—

are from the following passage in *Dorastus and Fawnia*:—  
“And yet, Dorastus, shame not the shepherd's weed—  
The heavenly gods have sometimes earthly thoughts;  
Neptune became a ram, Jupiter a bull, Apollo a shepherd:  
*They* gods, and yet in love—*Thou* a man, appointed to love.” By his adherence to the novel, the poet has also been led into the grossest geographical blunders, as making Bohemia a maritime country, sending ambassadors to the isle of Delphos, &c. He has likewise been betrayed into such improbabilities and breach of the dramatic rules, as could only be atoned for by his skilful delineation of character, and that wild simplicity which pervades the sentiments and language.

Greene is also author of a romance called *Arcadia*, published in 1587, and formed on the model of Sidney's celebrated pastoral, which, though it was not printed till some years after the publication of Greene's *Arcadia*, had been written a considerable time before it.

The most beautiful, however, and best known of Greene's

productions, is his *Philomela*, otherwise called *Lady Fitzwater's Nightingale*, in honour of the *Lady Fitzwater*, to whom it is addressed; "being penned," as the author says in the dedication, "to approve woman's chastity." This beautiful tale has been lately reprinted in the first number of the *Archaica*, and is sufficient, as the editor remarks, to rescue the author's memory from the shame of a *constant* prostitution of his talents to immoral purposes. The character of *Philomela* is so exquisitely drawn, with so many attractions of saintlike purity, that the fancy which portrayed it, must have been at times illumined by the most tender and sublime conceptions. The style is indeed deformed by the affectations of Euphuism, but, in the conduct of the story, there is a selection of circumstances which anticipates the skill of a later period, and which is the more remarkable, when contrasted with the prolixity of *Sidney's Arcadia*, a work enjoying in that age the highest reputation.

*Philomela*, the heroine of this tale, was the wife of a Venetian nobleman, *Count Philippo Medici*, and formed the wonder of that city, "not for her beauty, though Italy afforded none so fair—not for her dowry, though she were the only daughter of the Duke of Milan, but for the admirable honours of her mind, which were so many and matchless, that Virtue seemed to have planted there the paradise of her perfection." Though the veil which this lady "used for her face was the covert of her own house—though she never would go abroad but in company of her husband, and then with such bashfulness, that she seemed to hold herself faulty in stepping beyond the shadow of her own mansion;" nevertheless, the unreasonable count "tormented her more with jealousy than recompensed her with affection, feeding upon that passion that gnaweth like envy upon her own flesh." In this frame of mind he bethought himself who of his guests had "most courteous entertainment at her hand." It is true, he was unable to call to his recollection any impropriety of conduct, or even levity of behaviour; but then he remembered "that every outward appearance is not an authentional instance, that the greener the *Alisander* leaves be, the more bitter is the sap, and the salamander is the most warm

when he lieth furthest from the fire ;” from all which he drew the inference, “ that women are most heart-hollow when they are most lip-holy.”

This unfortunate recollection concerning the colour of Alisander leaves, and the very peculiar properties of the salamander, together with other similitudes equally conclusive, drawn from stars and eagles and astronomers’ almanacks, induced the count to employ an intimate friend, called Giovanni Lutesio, the most fine and courtly gentleman of Venice, to “ make experience of his wife’s honesty ;” Lutesio promising the husband, that, if he found her pliant to listen to his passion, he would make it manifest to him without dissembling.

Lutesio accordingly began to lay his baits, and one day, when he found Philomela sitting alone in her garden, singing to her lute many merry ditties, he embraced an opportunity of informing her that he was in love, but without revealing who was the object of his passion. On this occasion Philomela propounded so many moral maxims, illustrated by apposite examples drawn from mythology and Roman history, and said so many fine things about ravens and musked Angelica, that he did not venture to proceed farther, but went to inform his friend of the modesty of his wife, and to rehearse the “ cooling card of good counsel ;” which he had received from her prudence.

The husband, however, was not satisfied ; he attributed the legend of good lessons she had uttered, to his friend having refrained from professing a passion for herself, and therefore persuaded him to declare a love which he did not feel. Lutesio accordingly sent her a letter to that purpose, accompanied by a bad sonnet. Philomela returned an indignant answer, but also replied to the sonnet, to “ show that her wit was equal to her virtue.”

All this was reported to the husband, who now began to entertain suspicions of Lutesio, and to fear, that “ Men cannot dally with fire, nor sport with affection, and that he who had been a suitor in jest might be a speeder in earnest.” At length his suspicions were so confirmed by trifles light as air, that he entertained no doubt of the infidelity of his wife, but as he had no proof, he suborned two of his slaves to testify her guilt. The courts of justice

accordingly pronounced a sentence of divorce, and banished both Lutesio and Philomela from the Venetian territory.

Philomela sailed for Palermo. During the voyage the shipmaster became enamoured of her beauty, "but his passion was so quailed by the rareness of her qualities, that he rather endeavoured to reverence her as a saint, than to love her as a paramour." On her arrival at Palermo, she resided with him and his wife, and found in their humble dwelling that "quiet rested in low thoughts, and the safest content in the poorest cottages; that the highest trees abide the sharpest storms, and the greatest personages the sorest frowns of fortune: therefore with patience she brooked her homely course of life, and had more quiet sleeps than in her palace in Venice; only her discontent was when she thought on Philipppo, that he had proved so unkind, and on Lutesio, that for her sake he was so deeply injured: yet, as well as she might, she salved these sores, and covered her hard fortunes with the shadow of her innocence."

Meanwhile Lutesio had fled to the Duke of Milan, the father of Philomela, and informed him of the injuries inflicted on his daughter. The duke immediately proceeded to Venice, and sought reparation from the senate. Those slaves who had been suborned by the count, confessed their perjury. Then the count, conscience-stricken, rose up and declared, "that there is nothing so secret but the date of days will reveal; that as oil, though it be moist, quencheth not fire, so time, though ever so long, is no sure covert for sin; but as a spark raked up in cinders will at last begin to glow and manifest a flame, so treachery hidden in silence will burst forth and cry for revenge."

"Whatsoever villany," continued he, "the heart doth work, in process of time the worm of conscience will bewray. It booteth little by circumstance to discover the sorrow I conceive, or little need I show my wife's innocence, when these slaves whom I suborned to perjure themselves, have proclaimed her chastity and my dishonour: suffice it then that I repent, though too late, and would make amends; but I have sinned beyond satisfaction, for there is no sufficient recompense for unjust slan-



der. Therefore, in penalty of my perjury towards Philomela, I crave myself justice against myself, that you would enjoin a penance, but no less than the extremity of death."

The life of Philippo, however, was spared by the clemency of the duke, and all set out in different directions in quest of the injured Philomela. The husband arrived at Palermo, and in despair accused himself of a murder which had been committed in an obscure corner of the city. Philomela hearing that a Venetian was thrown into prison, asked to see him, and perceived through the lattice that he was indeed her husband; and, about the same time, she learned that her innocence had been established at Venice. Her first emotions were those of indignation and hopes of revenge, but soon she reminded herself "that the word husband is a high term, easily pronounced in the mouth, but never to be banished from the heart—knowest thou not that the love of a wife must not end but by death? that the term of marriage is dated in the grave?" She then framed to herself an excuse for the conduct of her husband, "that he did not work this wrong because he loved another, but because he overloved thee: 'twas jealousy that forced him to that folly, and suspicion is incident only to such as are kind-hearted lovers."

Under the influence of these sentiments she appeared in court, when her husband was arraigned, and accused herself of the murder. In the course of the trial, the innocence of both was made manifest. The judge inquired why these two did plead themselves guilty; Philippo answered for despair, as weary of his life—Philomela said for the safety of her husband.

"The Sicilians at this shouted at her wondrous virtues, and Philippo, in a swoon between grief and joy, was carried away half dead to his lodging, where he had not lain two hours, but, in an ecstasy, he ended his life. And Philomela hearing of the death of her husband, fell into extreme passions. She returned home to Venice, and there lived the desolate widow of Philippo Medici all her life; which constant chastity made her so famous, that in her life she was honoured as the paragon of virtue, and after her death solemnly, and with wonderful honour, entombed

in St. Mark's church, and her fame holden canonized until this day in Venice."

The concluding incident of the story of Philomela is evidently an awkward alteration of Boccaccio's celebrated story of Titus and Gesippus, (see above, vol. ii. p. 64.) The first part, which relates to the trial of the wife by the husband's friend, corresponds, as has doubtless been remarked, with the episode of the *Curioso Impertinente*, in Don Quixote, where Anselmo persuades his friend to try the chastity of his wife Camilla. It is not probable, however, that Greene and Cervantes copied from each other; Greene was dead before Don Quixote was published, and it is not likely that Cervantes had any opportunity of perusing Philomela. They must therefore have borrowed from some common original. Indeed, I remember to have once read the story in some old Italian novelist, but cannot now recall it more precisely to my recollection. Philomela is the origin of Davenport's play of the City Nightcap, where Lorenzo makes his friend Philippo try the chastity of his wife, Abstemia, sister to the Duke of Venice. This drama was written early in the 17th century, and has been published in Dodsley's collection; but the editor is mistaken in supposing that it is borrowed from the *Curioso Impertinente*, as the plot coincides much more closely with Philomela. Lorenzo bribes two slaves to swear to his wife's infidelity. The Duke of Venice comes to seek reparation for the wrongs of Abstemia, who had meanwhile retired to Milan, where all that takes place corresponds precisely with what occurs at Palermo in Philomela. The style, too, is full of Euphuism, and even the words of Greene are sometimes adopted:—

O when the Elisander leaf looks green,  
The sap is then most bitter. An approved appearance  
Is no authentic instance: she that is lip-holy  
Is many times heart-hollow.

Lodge and Greene are the only imitators of Lylic, who have atoned for affectation of style by any felicity of genius or invention; and I certainly do not mean to detain the reader with the Euphuism of Philotimus, by Brian Melbrank, published 1583, or Breton's Miseries of Mavillia,

merely because they were printed in black letter, and are as scarce as they deserve to be.

The style of novel-writing introduced by Lylie, was not of long popularity, but the taste by which it was succeeded is not more deserving of commendation. During the agitated reign of Charles I., and the subsistence of the commonwealth, the English nation were better employed than in the composition or perusal of romances. By the time of the Restoration, the popularity of the *Arcadia*, which had been published in the reign of James I., and prevalence of the French heroic romance, fostered a taste for more ponderous compositions than any that had hitherto appeared. The *Eliana*, printed in 1661, is as remarkable for its affectation, though of a different species, as the novels of the school of Euphues. In *Eliana*, when a person dies, he is said to depart into the subterranean walks of the Stygian grove—to see is always called to invisage, to raise is to suscite, and a ladder of ropes is termed a funeral ladder. Flora “spreads her fragrant mantle on the superficies of the earth, and bespangles the verdant grass with her beauteous adornments;” and a lover “enters a grove free from the frequentations of any besides the ranging beasts and pleasing birds, whose dulcet notes exulscerate him out of his melancholy contemplations.”

The celebrated Duchess of Newcastle employed herself in similar productions; but the only English romance of this description that obtained any notoriety, is the *Parthenissa* of Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery, which was published in 1664, and is much in the style of the French romance of the school of Calprenede and Scuderi. In the commencement of this work, a stranger, richly armed, and proportionally blest with all the gifts of nature and education, alights at the temple of Hierapolis in Syria, where the queen of love had fixed an oracle as famous as the deity to whom it was consecrated. A priest called Callimachus, who belonged to the establishment, accosted him, and, without farther introduction or ceremony, begged a relation of the incidents of his life: the stranger agreed to furnish him with the notices required as a penance, but it is not clear whether he means on himself or Callimachus; one thing, however, is certain, that a penance is

imposed on the reader. He prosecutes his story for some time without intermission, and then devolves it on a faithful attendant.

It appears that the stranger is Artabanes, a Median prince, born and brought up at the court of the King of Parthia; and it is also unfolded that he is deeply enamoured of Parthenissa. This lady, who proves to be the heroine of the romance, had come, on occasion of the death of her father, to the Parthian court, to beg a continuance to herself of the revenues of a principality which he had enjoyed. Artabanes had soon an opportunity of evincing his passion; for on a great national festival, a procession, with a suitable accompaniment of trumpets and clarions, announced the approach of a character of importance. This stranger proved to be an Arabian prince, who had come on the old errand of establishing, by single combat, the incomparable nature of the charms of his mistress; he displayed a portable picture gallery, comprehending the portraits of four and twenty beauties, whose deluded lovers had the presumption to maintain that the charms of their mistresses equalled those of the fair Mizalenza. The prowess of Artabanes not only prevented the resemblance of Parthenissa from being added to the exhibition, but obtained for her at one blow, possession of the *chefs-d'oeuvre* in the collection of his antagonist. Artabanes, however, had a formidable rival in Surena, who was the chief favourite of the king. As Surena found that he made no progress in the affections of Parthenissa, he bribed one of her confidants to place a letter in the way of Artabanes, purporting that a good understanding subsisted between himself and Parthenissa. Artabanes had, in consequence, a dreadful combat with Surena, whose life, however, he spared, and then abandoned his country, under a firm conviction of the infidelity of Parthenissa, and with the fixed resolution of taking up his residence on the summit of the Alps. On his voyage to that lofty region he was taken by a pirate, who presented him, along with fourscore other captives, to his friend and protector, Pompey, the notorious patron and encourager of pirates. Having afterwards escaped from bondage, Artabanes put himself at the head of his fellow-slaves, and, his party in-

creasing, the hero of this romance turns out to be our old historical friend Spartacus. The account of the war is given correctly, only it is said to be a mistake that Spartacus was killed in the battle of the Trenches; as he not only survived that combat, but relinquished his scheme of Alpine retirement, and came *incognito* to Rome. There a Parthian friend arrived, who cleared up all his suspicions with regard to Parthenissa, and persuaded him to return with him to the East. On his arrival in Asia, he was much encumbered by his old rival Surena, and also by a new competitor who had sprung up in the person of the monarch. Parthenissa having fallen under the power of the latter, who, she feared, intended to push his gallantry to the utmost, swallowed a potion, which gave her the appearance of death. Our credulous hero believing she was poisoned, was invaded with so high a sorrow that he stabbed himself, but having recovered by aid of surgeons, he had come to Hierapolis, as related near the beginning of the romance, to consult the oracle on what was to be done in this extremity. Callimachus, the priest, in return for the above relation, undertakes the history of his own adventures: he proves to be Nicomedes, King of Bithynia, father of Julius Cæsar's Nicomedes; but while his story is telling, a lady, who has all the exterior appearance of Parthenissa, is perceived to land, and enter a thicket with a young knight. Artabanus, however, could hardly believe her to be his mistress, in the first place, because he knew she was dead; and, secondly, her behaviour was inconsistent with her fidelity to him and with female decorum. The romance breaks off before the author disengages his heroine from the suspicious predicament in which he had placed her. The unfinished state in which the work has been left, which is the chief objection to Marianne and the Paysan Parvenu, is what no critic will blame in the Parthenissa. Beside the episode of Callimachus, there is also the story of Perolla, one of the adherents of Spartacus, who was enamoured of a fair Capuan, and by a singular misfortune, considering the very different periods at which they flourished, had Hannibal for a rival. Such was the Carthaginian's passion, that while he remained in Italy he delivered up the conduct of



all martial affairs unto the generous Maharbal, and declined the conquest of the world to conquer the unfortunate Izadora. Nevertheless he would unavoidably have effected the former object, at the time he advanced to Rome, had not his fair enemy, by the most pressing entreaties, persuaded him to carry his arms to other quarters rather than employ them in the destruction of that city which had given her birth. Hannibal and Spartacus were, perhaps, the two heroes of antiquity worst qualified to act the parts of whining lovers in a romance; the latter, especially, excites little interest, and no romantic ideas are associated with his name.

Of the six parts, of which this romance consists, one is dedicated to the Duchess of Orleans, and the others to Lady Sunderland, better known by the name of Sacharissa.

The circumstance of the work of Lord Orrery, and the *Eliana*, being both left incomplete, shows that there was no great encouragement extended to this species of composition. Indeed, a romance of the description of *Parthenissa*, though it might be well adapted to the more solemn gallantry of the court of Louis XIV. was not likely in King Charles's days to be popular in this country, or to produce imitation. There was, in consequence, a demand for something of a lighter and less exalted description, and accordingly, to this period may be ascribed the origin of that species of composition which, fostered by the improving taste of succeeding times, has been gradually matured into the English novel. In that age appeared the *Atalantis* of Mrs. Manley, which, like the *Astrea*, was filled with fashionable scandal. From this circumstance it was popular for a certain period, and its immortality was foretold by Pope, as rashly as a thousand years of bloom were promised to the Beauties painted by Jarvis.

The novels of Mrs. Behn, who died in 1689, were for the most part written towards the close of the reign of Charles the Second. Of this lady, Sir R. Steele said, as we are informed in Granger's *Biographical Dictionary*, that she understood the practic part of love better than the speculative. Her writings have not escaped the moral contagion which infected the literature of that age; and, indeed, if only one contemporary poet should boast unspot-

ted lays, it can hardly be expected that this should have been the lot of a single novelist. The story of *Oroonoko* is the most interesting of the novels of Mrs. Behn, and is not liable to the objections which may be charged against many of the others. The incidents which furnished the outline of this tale fell under the author's own observation when she accompanied her father to Surinam, and, as related by the novelist, have supplied Southern with the plot of one of the best known and most affecting of his tragedies.

Mrs. Behn was imitated by Mrs. Heywood, who was born in 1696, and died in 1758. Her earlier novels, as *Love in Excess*—*The British Recluse*—*The Injured Husband*, in which she has detailed the intricacies, and unveiled the loosest scenes of intrigue, have all the faults in point of morals, of the productions by which they were preceded. Her male characters are in the highest degree licentious, and her females are as impassioned as the Saracen princesses in the Spanish romances of chivalry. *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, however, a later and more extended production of this writer, though not free in every passage from the objections that may be charged against her former compositions, is deserving of notice, both on account of its merit, and of having apparently suggested the plan of Miss Burney's *Evelina*.

In the novel of Mrs. Heywood, a young lady makes, at an early age, her first appearance in London on the great and busy stage of life. In that city she resides under the protection of Lady Mellasin, a woman of low birth, of vulgar manners, and dissolute character, whose husband had been appointed the guardian of Miss Thoughtless, by her father. From this woman, and from the malice and impertinence of her daughter, Miss Flora, the heroine, suffers much uneasiness on her entrance into life. Though possessed of a virtuous mind, a good understanding, and a feeling heart, her heedlessness of ceremony, her ignorance of forms, and inexperience of the manners of the world, occasion many perplexing incidents, and lead her into awkward situations, most mortifying to her vanity, which, at length, alarm the delicacy, and almost for ever alienate the affections, of an amiable and devoted lover.

Evelina, it will be recollected, was placed in an analogous situation, and her embarrassments originated in similar circumstances. The chief perplexity of Mr. Trueworth, the admirer of Miss Thoughtless, arose from meeting her in company with Miss Forward, who had been her companion at a boarding-school, and of whose infamous character she was ignorant. In like manner the delicacy of Lord Orville is wounded, and his attachment shaken, by meeting his Evelina in similar society at Vauxhall. The subsequent visit and counsel of the lovers to their mistresses is seen, however, in a very different point of view by the heroines.

But not only is the plan of Betsy Thoughtless analogous to that of Evelina, but many of the characters coincide with those delineated in that celebrated performance. Mr. Trueworth is the same generous and pleasing lover as Lord Orville. Lady Mellasin, with whom Miss Thoughtless resides in London, is the same low-born, coarse, and dissolute woman with Mad. Duval. The malice and jealousy with which Miss Flora Mellasin persecutes the heroine in the beginning of the older novel, corresponds to the malice and jealousy of the Miss Branghtons. Miss Mabel, the amiable and modest friend of Betsy Thoughtless, seems to have suggested the character of Miss Mirvan, the companion of Evelina; while in the novel of Mrs. Heywood, and of Miss Burney, we may trace the same assurance, affected indifference, and impertinent gallantry, in many of the secondary characters.

Towards the middle of the 18th century the number of English novels rapidly increased. Those which have appeared subsequently to that period may, I think, be divided into the *serious*, the *comic*, and the *romantic*.

At the head of the first class we must unquestionably place the works of Richardson. The earliest performance of that celebrated writer is his Pamela, the first part of which was published in 1740. We are informed, in the Life of Richardson, that the booksellers, for whom he occasionally employed his pen, had requested him to give them a volume of familiar letters on various supposed occasions. It was the intention of the author to render his work subservient to the benefit of the inferior classes of

society, but letter producing letter, it grew into a story, and was at length given to the public under the title of the *History of Pamela*. In the work above quoted, it is said, that the author's object in *Pamela* is twofold: to reclaim a libertine by the influence of a virtuous affection, and to conduct virtue safe and triumphant through the severest trials to an honourable reward. With this view, a young girl in the humblest sphere of life, is represented as exposed to the amorous solicitations of her master. The earlier part of the story consists of the attempts practised against her virtue, and her successful resistance, all which are related in letters from *Pamela* to her parents, whose characters are intended as a representation of the manners and virtues of the humblest sphere of English society. From the unremitting assiduity of her master, however, our heroine begins to think she may play a higher game than a mere escape from his snares: prudence now comes to the aid of purity, and her master, after a struggle between passion and pride, rewards her by the offer of his hand, which is most thankfully accepted. Two volumes were subsequently added, which exhibited *Pamela* in the marriage state. From these two parts Goldoni has formed his comedies of *Pamela Nubile*, and *Pamela Maritata*.

On its first appearance, *Pamela* was received with universal applause, but its fame has been in some measure dimmed by the brighter reputation of its author's subsequent performances. Of these, *Clarissa* is the production on which his reputation is principally founded. It is the story, as is universally known, of a young lady, who, to avoid a matrimonial union to which her heart could not consent, and to which she was urged by her parents, casts herself on the protection of a lover, who scandalously abuses the confidence she had reposed in him, and finally succeeds in gratifying his passion, though he had failed in ensnaring her virtue. She rejects the reparation of marriage which was at length tendered, and retires to a solitary abode, where she expires, overwhelmed with grief and with shame. It is a trite remark, that it was reserved for Richardson, in this story, to overcome all circumstances of dishonour and disgrace, to exhibit the dignity of virtue in circumstances the most painful, and apparently the most

degrading, and to show, which seems to be the great moral of the work, that in every situation virtue is triumphant.

The chief merit of Richardson consists in his delineation of character. *Clarissa* is the model of female excellence. There is something similar in the rest of the Harlowe family, and at the same time something peculiar to each individual. "The stern father," says Mrs. Barbauld, "the passionate and dark-souled brother, the envious and ill-natured sister, the money-loving uncles, the gentle but weak-spirited mother, are all assimilated by that stiffness, love of parade, and solemnity, which is thrown over the whole group, and by the interested family views in which they all concur." The character of *Lovelace*, as is well known, is an expansion of that of *Lothario* in the *Fair Penitent*; but, in the opinion of Dr. Johnson, expressed in his *Life of Rowe*, the novelist has greatly excelled his original in the moral effect of the fiction. "*Lothario*," says the illustrious biographer, "with gaiety which cannot be hated, and bravery which cannot be despised, retains too much of the spectator's kindness. It was in the power of Richardson alone to teach us at once esteem and detestation; to make virtuous resentment overpower all the benevolence which art and elegance and courage naturally excite; and to lose at last the hero in the villain."

But though the character of *Lovelace* may not perhaps be objectionable in its moral tendency, there is no representation, in the whole range of fiction, which is such an outrage on verisimilitude. Such a character as *Lovelace* not only never existed, but seems incompatible with human nature. Great crimes may be hastily perpetrated where there is no strong motive for their commission, but a long course of premeditated villany has always some assignable object which cannot be innocently attained.

Richardson having exhibited in his *Clarissa* a model of female delicacy, grace, and dignity, attempted in *Sir Charles Grandison*, his third and last production, to represent a perfect male character, who should unite every personal advantage and fashionable accomplishment with the strict observance of the duties of morality and religion. All the incidents have a reference to the multifarious interests of this "faultless monster;" and the other characters



seem only introduced to give him an opportunity of displaying in every light his various perfections, with the exception perhaps of Clementina, whose mental alienation is painted with such genuine touches of nature and passion, that it would scarcely suffer in a comparison with the phrensy of Orestes, or madness of Lear.

Thus, the object of Richardson in all his novels is to show the superiority of virtue. He attempts, in Pamela, to render the character of a libertine contemptible, and to exhibit the excellence of virtue in an unpolished mind, with the temporal reward which it sometimes obtains. On the other hand, in Clarissa he has displayed the beauty of mental perfection, though in this life it should fail of its recompense. In Sir Charles Grandison he has shown that moral goodness heightens and embellishes every talent and accomplishment.

Besides the publications of Richardson, there are several other productions of English fiction distinguished by their tenderness and pathos, and of which the chief object is to excite our sympathy. In Sidney Biddulph, by Mrs. Sheridan, every affliction is accumulated on the innocent heroine, in order to show that neither prudence nor foresight, nor the best dispositions of the human heart, are sufficient to defend from the evils of life. This work, we are told, was written in opposition to the moral system then fashionable, that virtue and happiness are constant concomitants, or, as expressed by Congreve in the conclusion of the Mourning Bride,—

That blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds,  
And though a late, a sure reward succeeds.

In the writings of Godwin, some of the strongest of our feelings are most forcibly awakened, and there are few novels which display more powerful painting, or excite higher interest, than his Caleb Williams. The character of Falkland, the chief actor, which is formed on visionary principles of honour, is perhaps not strictly an invention, as it closely resembles that of Shamont, in Beaumont and Fletcher's Nice Valour. But the accumulated wretchedness with which he is overwhelmed, the inscrutable mys-

tery by which he is surrounded, and the frightful persecutions to which he subjects the suspected possessor of his dreadful secret, are peculiar to the author, and are represented with a force which has not been surpassed in the finest passages and scenes of poetic or dramatic fiction. Godwin's other novel, *St. Leon*, is intended to show that the happiness of mankind would not have been augmented by the gifts of immortal youth and inexhaustible riches: but, in fact, the story does not establish the unsatisfactory nature of such endowments. *St. Leon*, except in the reserve and distrust created in his domestic circle, always appears rather to be persecuted by his ill-fortune, than by the consequences of his supernatural acquisitions. It is unfortunate too that, in order to show the protracted misery produced by the elixir of life, the author was forced to place his hero in a remote and superstitious age, since we can never help reflecting how different would have been the fate of *St. Leon* had he lived in a happier land and more enlightened period.

His misfortunes also are too much of the same description, as they chiefly arise from personal captivity—his successive imprisonments in the jail of Constance, the cells of the Inquisition at Madrid, and the dungeon of Bethlem Gabor. Hence that portion of the romance which precedes his acquirement of the elixir of life and secret of the transmutation of metals, has always appeared to me the most interesting. The historical part, relating to the Italian campaigns which terminated with the battle of Pavia, is told with infinite spirit. The domestic life of *St. Leon* is admirably exhibited in the contrasts of chivalric splendour, the wretchedness of want, and the comforts of competence; while Marguerite, alternately embellishing, supporting, and cheering these varied scenes of existence, forms one of the finest representations of female excellence that has ever been displayed. The character, too, of *St. Leon* is ably sustained—we are charmed with his early loyalty and patriotism—his elevation of soul and tender attachment to his family; while, at the same time, his fondness for magnificence and admiration naturally prepares his acceptance of the pernicious gifts of the alchemist. Through the whole romance the dialogues

are full of eloquence, and almost every scene is sketched with the strong and vivid pencil of a master. Never was escape more interesting than that of St. Leon from the *Auto da Fe* at Valladolid, or landscape more heart-reviving than that of his subsequent journey to the mansion of his fathers! Never did human genius portray a more frightful picture of solitude and mental desolation, than that of the mysterious stranger who arrives at the cottage of St. Leon, and leaves him the fatal bequest! At the conclusion we are left with the strongest impressions of those feelings of desertion and deadness of heart experienced by St. Leon, and which were aggravated by his constant remembrance of scenes of former happiness.

Of the authors of *Comic Romance*, the two most eminent, as every one knows, are Fielding and Smollett, concerning whose works I shall not detain the reader. No one wishes to be told, for the twentieth time, that the former is distinguished for his delineation of country squires, and the latter of naval characters. The eminence of each, in these different kinds of painting, is a strong proof how necessary experience and intercourse with the world are to a painter of manners—Fielding for some years having been a country squire, and Smollett a surgeon's mate on board a ship of the line. *Tom Jones* is the most celebrated of Fielding's works, and is perhaps the most distinguished of all comic romances. The author warmly interests us in the fortunes of his hero, involves him, by a series of incidents, in the greatest difficulties; and again, when all is dark and gloomy, by a train of events, at once natural and extraordinary, he relieves both his hero and his reader from distress. Never was a work more admirably planned; not a single circumstance occurs which does not, in some degree, contribute to the catastrophe; and, besides, what humour and *naïveté*, what wonderful force and truth in the delineation of incident! As a story, *Tom Jones* seems to have only one defect, which might have been so easily remedied, that it is to be regretted that it should have been neglected by the author. Jones, after all, proves illegitimate, when there would have been no difficulty for the author to have supposed that his mother had been privately married to the young

clergyman. This would not only have removed the stain from the birth of the hero, but, in the idea of the reader, would have given him better security for the property of his uncle Allworthy. In fact, in a miserable continuation which has been written of the history of Tom Jones, the wrongheaded author (of whom Blifil was the favourite,) has made his hero bring an action against Tom after the death of Mr. Allworthy, and oust him from his uncle's property.

Of the writings of Smollett, by far the most original is Humphry Clinker. In this novel the author most successfully executes, what had scarcely ever been before attempted—a representation of the different effects which the same scenes, and persons, and transactions, have on different dispositions and tempers. He exhibits through the whole work a most lively and humorous delineation, confirming strongly the great moral truth, that happiness and all our feelings are the result, less of external circumstances, than the constitution of the mind. In his other writings, the sailors of Smollett are most admirably delineated—their mixture of rudeness and tenderness—their narrow prejudices—thoughtless extravagance—dauntless valour—and warm generosity. In his *Peregrine Pickle*, Smollett's sea characters are a little caricatured, but the character of Tom Bowling, in *Roderick Random*, has something even sublime, and will be regarded in all ages as a happy exhibition of those naval heroes, to whom Britain is indebted for so much of her happiness and glory.

Although, as has been already mentioned, it is not my design to enter into a minute consideration of English novels, an analysis of which would require some volumes, it would not be proper altogether to overlook a *Romantic* species of novel, which seems in a great measure peculiar to the English, which differs in some degree from any fiction of which I have yet given an account, and which has recommended itself to a numerous class of readers by exciting powerful emotions of terror.

“There exists,” says an elegant writer, “in every breast at all susceptible of the influence of the imagination, the germ of a certain superstitious dread of the world un-

known, which easily suggests the ideas of commerce with it. Solitude—darkness—low-whispered sounds—obscure glimpses of objects, tend to raise in the mind that thrilling mysterious terror, which has for its object ‘the powers unseen, and mightier far than we.’”

It is perhaps singular, that emotions so powerful and universal should not have been excited by fiction at an earlier period; for this species of composition cannot be traced higher than the *Castle of Otranto*, by Horace Walpole.

The following curious account of the origin and composition of this romance is given by the author himself in a letter to Mr. Cole, dated Strawberry Hill, March 9, 1769. “Shall I confess to you what was the origin of this romance? I waked one morning in the beginning of last June from a dream, of which all I could recover was, that I had thought myself in an ancient castle, (a very natural dream for a head filled like mine with Gothic story,) and that on the uppermost bannister of a great staircase, I saw a gigantic hand in armour. In the evening I sat down and began to write, without knowing in the least what I intended to say or relate. The work grew on my hands, and I grew fond of it. Add, that I was very glad to think of any thing rather than politics. In short, I was so engrossed with my tale, which I completed in less than two months, that one evening I wrote from the time I had drunk tea, about six o’clock, till half an hour after one in the morning, when my hand and fingers were so weary, that I could not hold the pen to finish the sentence, but left Matilda and Isabella talking in the middle of a paragraph. You will laugh at my earnestness, but, if I have amused you by retracing with any fidelity the manners of ancient days, I am content.”

To the work, however, which was written with so much interest, Mr. Walpole did not affix his name, but published it as a translation from an Italian author, whom he called Onuphrio Montalto: he also feigned that it had been originally printed in black letter at Naples, in 1529, and that it had been recently discovered in the library of an ancient Catholic family in the north of England. The production was ill received on its first appearance, and the



extravagant commendations heaped on the imaginary author by the real one, appear abundantly absurd, now that the deception has been discovered.

The work is declared by Mr. Walpole to be an attempt to blend the ancient romance and modern novel; but, if by the ancient romance be meant the tales of chivalry, the extravagance of the *Castle of Otranto* has no resemblance to their machinery. What analogy have skulls or skeletons—sliding pannels—damp vaults—trap-doors—and dismal apartments, to the tented fields of chivalry and its airy enchantments?

It has been much doubted, whether the *Castle of Otranto* was seriously or comically intended; if seriously, it is a most feeble attempt to excite awe or terror; an immense helmet is a wretched instrument for inspiring supernatural dread, and the machinery is so violent that it destroys the effect it was intended to raise. A sword which requires a hundred men to lift it—blood dropping from the nose of a statue—the hero imprisoned in a helmet, resemble not a first and serious attempt at a new species of composition, but look as if devised in ridicule of preceding extravagance, as *Don Quixote* was written to expose the romances of chivalry, by an aggravated representation of their absurdities.

But, whether seriously intended or written in jest, the story of the *Castle of Otranto* contains all the elements of this species of composition. We have hollow groans, Gothic windows that exclude the light, and trap-doors with flights of steps descending to dismal vaults. The deportment, too, of the domestics, the womanish terrors of waiting-maids, and the delay produced by their coarse pleasantries and circumlocutions, have been imitated in all similar productions. For this incongruity, Mr. Walpole offers as an apology, that Shakspeare was the model he copied, who, in his deepest tragedies, has introduced the coarse humour of grave-diggers and clumsy jests of Roman citizens. He argues, that however important may be the duties, and however grave and melancholy the sensations, of heroes and princes, the same affections are not stamped on their domestics, at least they do not express their passions in the same dignified tone, and the contrast thus

produced between the sublime of the one, and the *naïveté* of the other, sets the pathetic of the former in a stronger point of view.

The Old English Baron, written by Clara Reeve, and published in 1780, is the literary offspring of the Castle of Otranto, and, like it, hinges on the discovery of a murder by supernatural agency, and the consequent restoration of the rightful heir to his titles and fortune. This romance is announced as an attempt to unite the most attractive and interesting circumstances of the ancient romance, with the incidents and feelings of real life. The latter, however, are sometimes too accurately represented, and the most important and heroic characters in the work exhibit a natural anxiety about settlements, stocking of farms, and household furniture, which ill assimilates with the gigantic and awful features of the romance.—“Sir Philip had a conference with Lord Fitz-Owen, concerning the surrender of the estate, in which he insisted on the furniture, and stocking of the farm, in consideration of the arrears. Lord Fitz-Owen slightly mentioned the young man’s education and expenses. Sir Philip answered, ‘You are right, my lord, I had not thought of this point.’” And again, “‘You, my son, shall take possession of your uncle’s house and estate, only obliging you to pay to each of your younger brothers the sum of one thousand pounds.’” The baron caught Sir Philip’s hand; “‘Noble sir, I will be your tenant for the present. My castle in Wales shall be put in repair in the mean time. There is another house on my estate that has been shut up many years. I will have it repaired and furnished properly at my own charge.’”

The observations on the romantic species of novel, may conclude with the writings of Mrs. Radcliffe, since those who followed her in the same path, have in general imitated her manner with such servility, that they have produced little that is new either in incident or machinery. The three most celebrated of her productions, and indeed the only ones which I have read, are the Romance of the Forest, the Mysteries of Udolpho, and the Italian, or Confessional of the Black Penitents.

Of this justly celebrated woman, the principal object

seems to have been to raise powerful emotions of surprise, awe, and especially terror, by means and agents apparently supernatural. To effect this, she places her characters, and transports her readers, amid scenes which are calculated strongly to excite the mind, and to predispose it for spectral illusion: Gothic castles, gloomy abbeys, subterraneous passages, the haunts of banditti, the sobbing of the wind, and the howling of the storm, are all employed for this purpose; and in order that these may have their full effect, the principal character in her romances is always a lovely and unprotected female, encompassed by snares, and surrounded by villains. But, that in which the works of Mrs. Radcliffe chiefly differ from those by which they were preceded is, that in the Castle of Otranto and Old English Baron, the machinery is in fact supernatural, whereas the means and agents employed by Mrs. Radcliffe are in reality human, and such as can be, or, at least, are professed to be, explained by natural events. By these means she certainly excites a very powerful interest, as the reader meanwhile experiences the full impression of the wonderful and terrific appearances; but there is one defect which attends this mode of composition, and which seems to be inseparable from it. As it is the intention of the author, that the mysteries should be afterwards cleared up, they are all mountains in labour, and even when she is successful in explaining the marvellous circumstances which have occurred, we feel disappointed that we should have been so agitated by trifles. But the truth is, they never are properly explained, and the author, in order to raise strong emotions of fear and horror in the body of the work, is tempted to go lengths, to account for which the subsequent explanations seem utterly inadequate. Thus, for example, after all the wonder and dismay, and terror and expectation, excited by the mysterious chamber in the castle of Udolpho, how much are we disappointed and disgusted to find that all this pother has been raised by an image of wax! In short, we may say not only of Mrs. Radcliffe's castles, but of her works in general, that they abound "in *passages* that lead to nothing."

In the writings of this author there is a considerable degree of uniformity and mannerism, which is perhaps the

case with all the productions of a strong and original genius. Her heroines too nearly resemble each other, or rather they possess hardly any shade of difference. They have all blue eyes and auburn hair—the form of each of them has “the airy lightness of a nymph”—they are all fond of watching the setting sun, and catching the purple tints of evening, and the vivid glow or fading splendour of the western horizon. Unfortunately they are all likewise early risers. I say unfortunately, for in every exigency Mrs. Radcliffe’s heroines are provided with a pencil and paper, and the sun is never allowed to rise or set in peace. Like *Tilburina* in the play, they are “inconsolable to the minuet in *Ariadne*,” and in the most distressing circumstances find time to compose sonnets to sunrise, the bat, a sea-nymph, a lily, or a butterfly.

Mrs. Radcliffe is indeed too lavish of her landscapes, and her readers have frequent occasion to lament that she did not follow the example of Mr. Puff in the play, “I open with a clock striking, to beget an awful attention in the audience—it also marks the time, which is four o’clock in the morning, and saves a description of the rising sun, and a great deal about gilding the eastern hemisphere.” It must be owned, however, that the landscapes of Mrs. Radcliffe are eminently beautiful, and their only fault is their too frequent recurrence. It would perhaps have puzzled William of Wyckham to comprehend the plan of her Gothic castles, but they are sufficiently vast, intricate, and gloomy. Nor does this writer excel only in painting rural nature, the accidents of light and shade, or castles and forests, but in descriptions of the effect of music, and, in short, she is eminent for picturesque delineation in general—for every thing by which the imagination or senses are affected. I know not that a more striking portrait is any where exhibited than that of Schedoni; and the strong impression he makes on our fancy is perhaps chiefly owing to the very powerful painting which is given of his external appearance.

Of the arts of composition, one of those most frequently employed by Mrs. Radcliffe, and which also arises from her love of picturesque effect, is contrast—or the making scenes of different characters or qualities succeed and re-

lieve each other. In this circumstance at least the fair writer agrees with Mr. Puff:

*Puff.* You have no more cannon to fire?

*Prompter, from within.* No, sir!

*Puff.* Now then for soft music.

Mrs. Radcliffe makes her soft music succeed her cannon with considerable felicity. Thus Emily is conducted by Bertrand and Ugo to a sweet cottage at the foot of the Appenines, previous to the siege of the gloomy castle of Udolpho, in which ghastly fabric she is soon afterwards replaced. In the Romance of the Forest also, not satisfied with Adeline's visit to the dreary tomb, and her journey with her treacherous guide through the midnight obscurity of the forest, she introduces a storm of thunder and lightning, as is likewise done in Emily's journey from Udolpho, in order to contrast more strongly the gay magnificence and soothing beauty of the villa of the marquis.

Akin to this distribution of light and shade, and in order to produce still farther effects of contrast and variety, there is a servant introduced into all these romances, who is recommended to us by simplicity and fidelity—Annette in Udolpho, and in the other two, Jeronimo and Peter. In the Romance of the Forest, the venerable La Luc, accompanied by his daughter and Adeline, visits the Glaciers, and we are in the first place stunned by a description of cataracts, and made giddy with precipices, lakes, and mountains—"they seated themselves," continues the author, "on the grass, under the shade of some high trees, near the ruins. An opening in the woods afforded a view of the distant Alps—the deep silence of solitude reigned. For some time they were lost in meditation.

"Adeline felt a sweet complacency, such as she had long been a stranger to. Looking at La Luc, she perceived a tear stealing down his cheek, while the elevation of his mind was strongly expressed on his countenance. He turned on Clara his eyes, which were now filled with tenderness, and made an effort to recover himself.

"The stillness and total seclusion of the scene, said Adeline, those stupendous mountains, the gloomy grandeur of these woods, together with that monument of faded glory, on which the hand of time is so emphatically im-



pressed, diffuse a sacred enthusiasm over the mind, and awaken sensations truly sublime.

“La Luc was going to speak, but Peter coming forward, desired to know whether he had not better open the wallet, as he fancied his honour and the young ladies must be main hungry, jogging on so far, up hill and down, before dinner. They acknowledged the truth of honest Peter’s suspicion, and took the hint.”

In all her under characters, Mrs. Radcliffe is extremely fond of delineating their circumlocution—their habit of answering from the point, or giving a needless detail of trivial circumstances, when the inquirer is on the gasp of expectation, and the utmost expedition is requisite. I shall give the first instance that occurs to me. “Peter,” says the author, “having been one day to Aubaine for the weekly supply of provisions, returned with intelligence that awakened in La Motte new apprehension and anxiety.

“Oh, sir, I’ve heard something that has astonished me, as well it may, (cried Peter)—and so it will you when you come to know it. As I was standing in the blacksmith’s shop while the smith was driving a nail into the horse’s shoe (by the bye the horse lost it in an odd way)—I’ll tell you, sir, how it was.

“Nay, pr’ythee, leave it till another time, and go on with your story.

“Why, then, sir, as I was standing in the blacksmith’s shop, comes in a man with a pipe in his mouth, and a large pouch of tobacco in his hand.

“Well—what has the pipe to do with the story?

“Nay, sir, you put me out: I can’t go on unless you let me tell it in my own way. As I was saying with a pipe in his mouth—I think I was there, your honour?

“Yes, yes.

“He sets himself down on the bench, and taking the pipe from his mouth, says to the blacksmith, ‘Neighbour, do you know any body of the name of La Motte hereabouts?’—Bless your honour, I turned all of a cold sweat in a minute! Is not your honour well? shall I fetch you any thing?

“No—but be brief in your narration.

“La Motte! La Motte! said the blacksmith, I think I

have heard the name. Have you so? said I; you're cunning then, for there's no such person hereabouts to my knowledge.

"Fool! why did you say that?"

"Because I did not want them to know your honour was here; and if I had not managed very cleverly, they would have found me out." In short, it appears by the sequel that honest Peter managed so very cleverly, that they by this very management did find him out.

It is impossible to give any specimen of the terrific scenes of Mrs. Radcliffe, as their effect depends on the previous excitement of the mind. They are in general admirably contrived in circumstances of time, place, and other incidents, to excite awe and apprehension. "A face shrouded in a cowl," says a writer whom I have frequently quoted, "a narrative suddenly suspended—deep guilt half-revealed—the untold secrets of a prison house, affect the mind more powerfully than any regular or distinct images of danger or of woe." Mrs. Radcliffe accordingly, by interspersing certain mysterious hints, gives full scope to conjecture and alarm, and aggravates the terrible, by leaving room to suppose that what she describes is little in comparison with what is afterwards to be revealed. By the involuntary expressions of her guilty characters, she presents them to our view as groaning under the consciousness of some dreadful crime, which is constantly present to their imaginations, but of which the remembrance does not prevent them from the perpetration of new atrocities. In short, in the hands of Mrs. Radcliffe, not merely the trampling of a steed, and the pauses of the wind, but, in certain circumstances, even common footsteps and the shutting of a door become sublime and terrible.

Of the three great works of Mrs. Radcliffe, the *Romance of the Forest*, which was suggested by one of the *Causes Celebres*, is perhaps on the whole, and as a whole, the most interesting and perfect in its fable. Abounding less in powerful writing than either of the others, the story is more naturally conducted, and is clogged with fewer improbabilities. Indeed, the apparently supernatural circumstances are accounted for at the end of the romance in

such a manner as scarcely to disappoint the reader, or to appear inadequate to the emotions of surprise and terror, which had been raised in the course of the work. The beginning of the romance is such as strongly to awaken interest; the mysterious flight of La Motte—the manner in which the heroine of the story is intrusted to him—the romantic forest and ruined abbey in which he takes shelter—his alarms for discovery—the arrival of his son—his visits to the awful tomb in the forest—the introduction of the wicked Marquis de Montalt, his deep-laid plots and sudden change of conduct towards Adeline, are all described in the most forcible manner. We are delighted with the wild and romantic seclusion of the abbey, and the spectral part of the story (if I may so express myself) is not exaggerated nor overcharged. There is scarcely to be found in any work of fiction, a more beautiful picture than that of La Luc and his family in the third volume; and it shows that Mrs. Radcliffe was capable of painting, not merely the general features of the personages in a romance, but the finer traits of character in a novel of real life. Clara de Luc is the most interesting female character in the volumes of Mrs. Radcliffe. In the Romance of the Forest also we are less fatigued with landscapes, than in the Mysteries of Udolpho or the Italian. It is true, that the heroine Adeline is pretty liberal of her poesy, but in this case we are warned of our danger, and can avoid it; whereas in prose we have no previous notice, and are forced to observe the purple tints, and all the other tints which occur, or in the course of ages may occur at sunrise or sunset, lest we may unwarily pass over and lose any of the incidents.

It is to be regretted, that the last volume of the Italian, or that portion of it which relates to the Inquisition, has not been managed with more skill, as, by its improbability and exaggeration, it in a great measure destroys the very powerful interest which the other parts of the romance are calculated to inspire. Schedoni is wonderfully well painted: and his appearance, his mysteriousness, and the notion with which we are strongly impressed, of his having committed horrible and unheard-of crimes, strongly excite our curiosity and interest. The Neapolitan landscapes in this

romance are truly beautiful ; nor are the scenes of terror less forcibly portrayed. How many accumulated circumstances of danger thrill us with alarm, in the description of the escape of Vivaldi and Ellena from the convent ! How deeply are we impressed by the midnight examination of the corse of Bianchi, and the atrocious conference of the Marchesa with Schedoni, in the dim twilight of the church of San Nicolo ! But, beyond all, the whole portion of the work, from where Ellena is conveyed to the desolate house of Spalatro on the sea-shore, to the chapter where she is conducted home by Schedoni, is in the first style of excellence, and has neither been exceeded in dramatic nor romantic fiction. The terror is not such as is excited by the moving of old tapestry, a picture with a black veil, the howling of the wind in a dark passage, or a skeleton in a corner with a rusty dagger lying at its side ; but is that which is raised by a delineation of guilt, horror, and remorse, which, if Shakspeare has equalled, he has not surpassed. A scene between Schedoni and Spalatro, before and after the former enters the apartment of Ellena, with a design to murder her, is perhaps the most striking that has ever been displayed. The conversation, too, of the guide who conducts Ellena and Schedoni through the forest, after they leave Spalatro, and the whole conduct of Schedoni on the occasion, is admirably painted.

The style of Mrs. Radcliffe is not pure, and is sometimes even ungrammatical, but in general it is rich and forcible. Her poetry, like her prose, principally consists in picturesque delineation.

On the whole, the species of composition which we have just been considering, though neither very instructive in its nature, nor so fitted, as some other kinds of fictitious writing, to leave agreeable impressions on the mind, is not without its value. To persons who are occupied with very severe and serious studies, romances of this kind afford perhaps a better relaxation than those which approach more nearly to the common business of life. The general tendency, too, of all these terrific works is virtuous. The wicked marquis, or villanous monk, meet at length the punishment they deserve, while the happy heroine, undisturbed by hobgoblins, or the illusions created

by the creaking of doors, sobbing of the wind, or partial gleams of light, discovers at length that the terrific castle, or mouldering abbey, in which she had been alarmed or tormented, is a part of her own domain, and enjoys in connubial happiness the extensive property of which she had unjustly been deprived. All this may be very absurd, but life perhaps has few things better than sitting at the chimney-corner in a winter evening, after a well-spent day, and reading such absurdities.

The above divisions of the Serious, Comic, and Romantic novels, comprehend the great proportion of English prose fictions. In this country we have had few of those works in which fable and history are blended, and which form so extensive a class of French novels. With the exception, perhaps, of the *Citizen of the World*, we have no production of any celebrity resembling the *Jewish Spy*, or *Persian Letters*, and in which various remarks on the manners and customs of a country are presented through the supposed medium of a foreigner, unbiassed by the habits and associations of a native. In the class of Fairy and Oriental Tales, we are equally deficient; but in that of the *Voyages Imaginaires*, no nation of Europe has produced three performances of equal merit with *Robinson Crusoe*, *Gulliver's Travels*, and *Gaudenzio di Lucca*.

De Foe and Swift, the authors of the two former of these works, though differing very widely in education, opinions, and character, have at the same time some strong points of resemblance. Both are remarkable for the unaffected simplicity of their narratives—both intermingle so many minute circumstances, and state so particularly names of persons, and dates, and places, that the reader is involuntarily surprised into a persuasion of their truth. It seems impossible that what is so artlessly told should be a fiction, especially as the narrators begin the account of their voyages with such references to persons living, or whom they assert to be alive, and whose place of residence is so accurately mentioned, that one is led to believe a relation must be genuine which could, if false, have been so easily convicted of falsehood. The incidents, too, are so very circumstantial, that we think it impossible they could have been mentioned unless they



had been real. For example, instead of telling us, like other writers, that Robinson Crusoe in his first voyage was shipwrecked, and giving a mere general description of mountainous billows, piercing shrieks, and other concomitants of a tempest, De Foe immediately verifies his narrative by an enumeration of particulars: "So partly rowing," says he, "and partly driving, our boat went away to the northward, sloping towards the shore, almost as far as Winterton-Ness. But we made slow way towards the shore; nor were we able to reach it till, being past the lighthouse at Winterton, the shore falls off to the westward towards Cromer, and so the land broke off a little the violence of the wind."

Those minute references immediately lead us to give credit to the whole narrative, since we think they would hardly have been mentioned unless they had been true. The same circumstantial detail of facts is remarkable in *Gulliver's Travels*, and we are led on by them to a partial belief in the most improbable narrations.\*

But the moral of Robinson Crusoe is very different from that of *Gulliver's Travels*. In the former we are delighted with the spectacle of difficulties overcome, and with the power of human ingenuity and contrivance to provide not only accommodation but comfort in the most unfavourable circumstances. Never did human being excite more sympathy in his fate than this shipwrecked mariner: we enter into all his doubts and difficulties, and every rusty nail which he acquires fills us with satisfaction. We thus learn to appreciate our own comforts, and we acquire, at the same time, a habit of activity; but, above all, we attain a trust and devout confidence in divine mercy and goodness. The author also, by placing his hero in an uninhabited island in the Western Ocean, had an opportunity of introducing scenes which, with the merit of truth, have all the wildness and horror of the most incredible fiction. *That foot in the sand—those Indians who land on the solitary shore to devour their captives*, fill us with

\* There is a good deal of this style of writing in a French work already mentioned, Sadeur's *Voyage to Australasia*, written by Gabriel de Foigni, about the year 1676.

alarm and terror, and, after being relieved from the fear of Crusoe perishing by famine, we are agitated by new apprehensions for his safety. The deliverance of Friday, and the whole character of that young Indian, are painted in the most beautiful manner; and, in short, of all the works of fiction that have ever been composed, Robinson Crusoe is perhaps the most interesting and instructive.

The moral effect of Gulliver's Travels is very different. It would, perhaps, be too much to say that the author had an express design to blacken and calumniate human nature, but at least his work displays evident marks of a diseased imagination and a lacerated heart—in short, of that frame of mind which led him in the epitaph he composed for himself, to describe the tomb as the abode, *Ubi saeva indignatio ulterius cor lacerare nequit*. We rise, accordingly, from Gulliver's Travels, not as from the work of De Foe, exulting in our nature, but giddy, and selfish, and discontented, and, from some parts, I may almost say brutified. The general effect, indeed, of works of satire and humour is perhaps little favourable to the mind, and they are only allowable, and may be read with profit, when employed as the scourges of vice or folly.

Gaudentio di Lucca is generally, and I believe, on good grounds, supposed to be the work of the celebrated Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne, one of the most profound philosophers and virtuous visionaries of his age. We are told, in the life of this celebrated man, that Plato was his favourite author; and indeed, of all English writers, Berkeley has most successfully imitated the style and manner of that philosopher. It is not impossible, therefore, that the fanciful Republic of the Grecian sage may have led Berkeley to write Gaudentio di Lucca, of which the principal object, apparently, is to describe a faultless and patriarchal form of government. This representation of perfection and happiness is exhibited in the journey of Gaudentio di Lucca to Mezzoramia, a country in the heart of the deserts of Africa, whose inhabitants had lived unknown to the rest of the world, and in a region inaccessible, except by the road by which Gaudentio was carried thither. This Italian having followed a seafaring life, was taken by corsairs, and conveyed to Alexandria. He

was there sold to one of the chiefs, or pophars, of this unknown country, who had come to Egypt on mercantile speculation. The best and most striking part of the work is the description of the journey across the desert sands, which the travellers traverse on dromedaries, and which are happily contrasted with those stations that lay on the road, where they sought repose and shelter. The region which Gaudentio finally reaches is described as a terrestrial paradise, and its government, laws, and customs, are what the author conceives to be most perfect in civil polity and social intercourse. His views are somewhat fantastic, but not so visionary as those exhibited in the Utopia. During his abode in this happy land, Gaudentio, who had been discovered to be the grand-nephew of the master whom he had followed to Mezzoramia, is treated with much distinction, and, at length, espouses the daughter of the pophar. But after a residence of twenty-five years, having lost his wife and children, he sets out for his own country, and after some adventures, arrives at Bologna, where he is arrested by the Inquisition, and forced to give an account of his adventures.

The style of this work is extremely pure, and some of the incidents, especially that of the Grand Vizier's daughter, who was afterwards sultana, exceedingly well managed. The portrait of the English Freethinker, towards the end of the work, is skilfully drawn, and the absurdity of the arguments of Hobbes very humorously displayed.

From the popularity of Robinson Crusoe, many compositions of a similar description appeared in England towards the middle of last century. Such are the "Travels and Adventures of William Bingfield, Esq.;" and also the "Life and Adventures of John Daniel, containing his Shipwreck with One Companion on a Desolate Island: his accidental Discovery of a Woman. Their peopling of the Island. Also a description of an Eagle invented by his Son Jacob, on which he flew to the Moon, with some Account of its Inhabitants. His Return, and accidental Fall into the Habitation of a Sea-Monster, with whom he lived Two Years." Of all these fictions, the best is the Voyage of Peter Wilkins, which was written about 1750, and has now fallen into unmerited neglect. In that work, the

simplicity of the language of De Foe, and also several of the incidents of his most celebrated production, have been happily imitated. As in Robinson Crusoe, Peter Wilkins is a mariner, who, after undergoing various calamities at sea, is thrown on a distant uninhabited shore. He is furnished with stores, utensils, and provisions, from the wreck of the ship in which he had sailed. De Foe, however, confines himself to incidents within the sphere of possibility, while the unknown author of Peter Wilkins has related many supernatural adventures—he has also created a new species of beings, which are amongst the most beautiful offsprings of imagination, and have been acknowledged in the Curse of Kehama, as the origin of the Glendoveers:—

The loveliest race of all of heavenly birth,  
Hovering with gentle motion o'er the earth,  
Amid the moonlight air,  
In sportive flight still floating round and round.

---

I have now finished what I proposed to write on the History and Progress of Fiction. To some of my readers I may appear, perhaps, to have dwelt too shortly on some topics, and to have bestowed a disproportionate attention on others; nor is it improbable that in a work of such extent and variety, omissions may have occurred of what ought not to have been neglected. Such defects were inseparable from an inquiry of this description, and must have, in some degree, existed even if I could have bestowed on it undivided attention, and if, instead of a relaxation, it had been my sole employment. I shall consider myself, however, as having effected much if I turn to this subject the attention of other writers, whose opportunities of doing justice to it are more favourable than my own. A work, indeed, of the kind I have undertaken, is not of a nature to be perfected by a single individual, and at a first attempt, but must be the result of successive investigations. By the assistance of preceding researches on the same subject, the labour of the future inquirer will be abridged, and he will thus be enabled to correct the mistakes, and supply the deficiencies, of those who have gone before him.





## A P P E N D I X.

No. 1.—p. 180.

JEAN PIERRÉ CAMUS

WAS born at Paris, 1582, of a family of some distinction : he was elevated to the bishopric of Beley before he was twenty-six years of age, and in this situation was remarkable for the conscientious discharge of his ecclesiastical duties : he was much beloved by the Protestants, but drew on himself the hatred of the monks, against whom he declaimed and wrote without intermission for many years. In 1629, Camus resigned his bishopric, and retired to an abbacy in Normandy, granted him by the king. Afterwards, however he was prevailed on to accept of ecclesiastical preferment, and was nominated to the bishopric of Arras ; but before his bulls arrived from Rome, he died, in the seventieth year of his age, in 1652, and was carried, in compliance with his instructions, to the hospital of Incurables.

The numerous sermons he delivered, some of which were afterwards published, are remarkable for their *naïveté*. One day pronouncing a discourse, which he had been appointed to preach before the Trois Etats, he asked, “What would our fathers have said to have seen offices of judicature in the hands of women and children ? What remains but to admit, like the Roman emperor, horses to the parliament ? And why not, since so many asses have got in already ?” He also said one day from the pulpit, that a single person might blaspheme, lie, or commit murder, but there was another sin so great *qu’il falloit être*

*deux de le commettre.* In somewhat better taste was his appeal to the charity of a numerous auditory: "Messieurs, on recommande a vos charités une jeune damoiselle qui n' a pas assez de bien pour faire *Voëu de Pauvreté.*" A great number of similar anecdotes concerning Camus, though not implicitly to be depended on, may be found in the *Menagiana*.

No. 2.—p. 217.

SCARRON.

PAUL SCARRON was born at Paris in 1610. He was of a respectable family, and was son to a man of considerable fortune. After the death of his mother his father again married. Scarron became an object of aversion to this second wife, and was, in a manner, driven from his paternal mansion. He assumed the clerical habit, which was by no means consonant to his disposition, travelled into Italy, and at his return continued to reside in Paris. A great part of his youth was passed in the society of Marion de Lorme and Ninon L'Enclos, whose gaiety, joined to their mild and accommodating morality, may have contributed, in some degree, to form the disposition of Scarron. The excesses in which he engaged destroyed his constitution—an acrid humour is said to have distilled on his nerves, and to have baffled all the skill of his physicians. At the age of twenty-seven he was seized with sciatica and rheumatism, and the most singular complication of painful and debilitating disorders; the approach of these distempers is said to have been accelerated by a frolic, in which he engaged during a carnival, in which he disguised himself as a savage, and being hunted by the mob, was forced for some time to conceal himself from his pursuers in a marsh. Whatever may have been the cause, he was at the age of thirty, reduced to that state of physical reprobation, which he describes in a picture he has drawn of himself. "My person was formerly well made, though little; my disorder has shortened it a foot; my legs and thighs first formed an obtuse angle, and at length an acute angle; my

thighs and body form another angle; and my head reclines on my breast, so that I am a pretty accurate representation of a Z; in a word, I am an abridgement of human miseries. This I have thought proper to tell those who have never seen me, because there are some facetious persons who amuse themselves at my expense, and describe me as made in a different way from what I am. Some say I am a *Cul de Jatte*; others that I have no thighs, and am set on a table in a case; others, that my hat is appended to a cord, which, by means of a pulley, I raise and let down to salute those who visit me. I have, therefore, got an engraving, in which I am accurately represented; indeed, among our wry-necked people, I pass for one of the handsomest."

With a view of alleviating his sufferings, Scarron visited different baths in France, but always returned to Paris in the same state of distortion in which he had left it. In addition to his other calamities he now found himself much embarrassed in his circumstances. After his father's death he and his full sisters became involved in a lawsuit with his stepmother and her daughters, which he lost. The case, or *factum*, which he drew up for the occasion, is entitled "Petition, or whatever you please, for Paul Scarron, Dean of the sick People of France, Anne and Frances Scarron, all three much incommoded in their Persons and Circumstances, Defenders against the Husband of Magdalane Scarron, &c. all whole and healthy, and making merry at the expense of others." The remainder of the petition is in a style of absurdity corresponding to its burlesque title. To add to his burdens, his two full sisters now consented to reside with him at Paris; of them he used to say, "que l' une aimoit le vin, et l' autre les hommes." At length he was considerably relieved in his circumstances by a pension from Cardinal Richelieu, and another from Anne of Austria. In 1646 he also obtained a living in the diocese of Mans from the bishop, and, as we have already seen, he began his Roman Comique on going to take possession of it.

Soon after his return to Paris, he became acquainted with Mademoiselle D'Aubigné, who lived with her mother in indigent circumstances, in a house opposite to that

in which Scarron resided ; and in two years after the first formation of this acquaintance, he was united to the young lady, who was now sixteen years of age. By this marriage Scarron lost his benefice at Mans, but still derived from it a considerable annual revenue, as he had sufficient interest to procure it for the *valet de chambre* of his friend Menage, who received the clerical tonsure for the occasion.

Scarron had formed expectations of a pension through the interest of the Cardinal Mazarine, and had dedicated to him one of his poems. In this hope he was totally disappointed, and accordingly wrote a satire, and suppressed a eulogy, of the minister. His house became a frequent place of rendezvous for those who were discontented with Mazarine, and who, collectively, have been so well known under the appellation of the *Fonde*. His most frequent visitors were Menage, Pellisson, and Sarrazin. In the society which resorted to the residence of her husband, Mad. de Scarron probably acquired those accomplishments of person and character, which laid the foundation of her future destiny.

The infirmities of Scarron daily increased ; but he still continued to occupy himself in writing *Vers Burlesques*. His principal composition in this style is the Virgil Travestie, on which his celebrity, for some time after his death, almost entirely rested. The chief pleasure now felt in the perusal of these productions, arises from our knowledge of the severity of the author's sufferings at the time he wrote them, and our admiration at his unalterable gaiety in the midst of so many misfortunes. But, indeed, in all ages—les gens qui font le plus rire sont ceux qui rient le moins.

Scarron was at length finally released from all his miseries in October, 1660. Every one knows that after his death his widow went to reside as an humble companion with a lady, at whose house she became acquainted with Mad. de Montespan. She was thus introduced to the notice of Louis XIV., with whom she so long lived under the name of Mad. de Maintenon. Perhaps the elevation to which Mad. Scarron attained, might be the reason why none of his numerous friends wrote the life of her husband,

nor recollected the anecdotes current concerning him, as his remembrance was by no means agreeable to his widow, and till the last moment her flatterers abstained from every thing that might tend to revive the recollection. “On a trop affecté,” says Voltaire, “d’oublier dans son epitaphe le nom de Scarron ; ce nom n’est point avilissant ; et l’omission ne sert qu’à faire penser qu’il peut l’être.”

No. 3.—p. 220.

#### ANTOINE FURETIERE,

**AUTHOR** of the *Roman Bourgeois*, was born at Paris in 1620. After he had been received an advocate, and even obtained some law appointments, he passed into orders, and obtained the abbacy of Châlivoi. He was admitted into the French Academy, 1662, and printed in 1658 an allegorical satire on the eloquence of the time. His *Dictionnaire Universel de la langue Française*, which was the foundation of that known under the name of *Dictionnaire de Trevoux*, was not edited till after his death ; for, having published a preliminary discourse, the farther printing was interdicted by the French Academy, which accused him of having purloined the materials which they had amassed for a similar work. Much was written on both sides on the subject of this controversy, and Furetiere spent the concluding years of his life in publishing libels against his former associates, which, according to the expression of one of the historians of the academy, “ne donnent pas une trop bonne idée de son esprit, et qui en donnent une bien plus mauvaise de son cœur.” Furetiere was finally convicted by the enemies he had thus exasperated, and expelled the academy. His place was not supplied during his life, but on his death the academy manifested its surviving resentment, by forbidding Mr. Bayle, his successor, to pronounce his eulogium.



No. 4.—p. 238.

## GEORGE OF MONTEMAYOR

WAS born in Portugal, in the neighbourhood of Coimbra. When very young he went into Spain, and, in the quality of musician, attended the infant Don Philip, son of Charles the Fifth: when this prince ascended the throne under the name of Philip II., Montemayor remained in his service in the capacity of a poet and wit. In this employment he continued till his death, which happened in 1562, two years after the publication of the *Diana*, which was printed in seven books in 1560. The continuation in eight books, by the physician Alonzo Perez of Salamanca, appeared in 1564, and that of Gaspard Gil Polo in 1574.

No. 5.—p. 275.

## LOUIS LE ROY DE GOMBERVILLE

WAS born in the beginning of the 17th century; he became an author at the age of fifteen, as he published a volume of poetry in 1624, consisting of quatrains, in honour of old age. He gave over writing romances about the age of forty-five, and in his frequent journeys to his territory of Gomberville, having formed a particular connexion with the Solitaries of Port-Royal, he became occupied with more serious concerns, entered on a penitentiary life, and wrote, it is said, a sonnet, on the Sacrament; he relaxed, however, we are told, towards the end of his days.

No. 6.—p. 280.

## GAUTIER DE COSTES SEIGNEUR DE LA CALPRENEDE

WAS by birth a Gascon, and was educated at Toulouse. He came first to Paris in 1632, and entered into the guards. In the year 1648, he married a woman, who,

according to some writers, had five husbands ; and it has been said that Calprenede was poisoned by her ; this story, however, is not believed, as it has been pretty well ascertained that he died in 1663, in consequence of an accident he met with from horseback.

Besides his romances, Calprenede has written a great number of tragedies, as *La Mort de Mithridate*, *Le Comte d'Essex*, *Bradamante*, &c. &c. In his prefaces to these tragedies, and in his conversation, he showed a good deal of that disposition for which the Gascons are proverbial. Boileau discovered this even in the heroes of his dramas :—

“Tout a l'humeur Gasconne en un auteur Gascon,  
Calprenede et Juba parlent du même ton.”

Cardinal Richelieu having read one of his tragedies, found the plot was tolerable, but declared the verses were *lâches* ; this being reported to the author, he exclaimed, “Comment ! *Lâches*—Cadédis il n'y a rien de lache dans la maison de la Calprenede.”

No. 7.—p. 292.

#### MADAME SCUDERI

WAS born at Havre, but came at an early period of her life to Paris, where she chiefly resided till her death, which happened in 1701, when she was in the 94th year of her age.

The Hotel de Rambouillet seems to have been the nursery in which the first blossoms of her genius were fostered ; and it must be acknowledged, that if the succeeding fruits were not of the finest flavour, their bulk was such as almost to render competition hopeless. They at least procured her admission into all the academies where women could be received. She corresponded with Queen Christina, from whom she received a pension with marks of particular favour, and during several years her house was attended by a sort of literary club, which at that time

seems to have been the highest ambition of the women of letters at Paris.

These honours did not preserve her, more than her brother, from the satire of Boileau. The pomp and self-conceit of the brother, and the extreme ugliness of the sister, furnished the poet with abundant topics of ridicule. The earliest romances of Mad. Scuderi were published under the name of her brother, and, in fact, he contributed his assistance to these compositions.

It is said that M. and Mad. Scuderi, travelling together at a time when they were engaged in the composition of *Artamenes*, arrived at a small inn, where they entered into a discussion, whether they should kill the Prince Mazares, one of the characters in that romance, by poison or a dagger; two merchants who overheard them, procured their arrest, and they were in consequence conducted to the *Conciergerie*, but dismissed after an explanation. A similar story has been somewhere related of Beaumont and Fletcher. While these dramatists were planning the plot of one of their tragedies at a tavern, the former was overheard to say, "I'll undertake to kill the king." Information being given of this apparently treasonable design, they were instantly apprehended, but were dismissed on explaining that they had merely imagined the death of a theatrical monarch.

#### No. 8.—p. 307.

#### MADAME LA FAYETTE

WAS daughter of Aymar de la Vergne, governor of Havre de Grace. In 1655 she married Francis, Count de la Fayette. She was held in high esteem in the reign of Louis XIV., and was much admired by all the wits of the period, who frequently assembled at her house, and to many of whom she was a liberal benefactress. Segrain, after being obliged to quit his residence with Mademoiselle Montpensier, became domesticated with Mad. de La Fayette, and was the chief director of her literary pursuits. In his name her two celebrated romances were first given

to the public, and it was on the appearance of Zayde, that Huet had the complaisance to write his excellent essay on the origin of romance. Besides her novels, Mad. La Fayette is author of *Memoirs of the Court of France*, in 1688, &c., *History of Henrietta of England*, and *Portraits of Persons about Court*; works admired for the same graces of style and delicacy of sentiment, which characterize her *Zayde* and *Princess of Cleves*.

No. 9.—p. 315.

#### MARIVAUX

WAS born in 1688, and died in 1763; his life is not composed of many incidents; he was twice married, was very poor and very charitable, and very easily offended, particularly in any thing relating to his own works. His conversation, we are told, was singular, and for some time amusing, but at length became fatiguing from its metaphysical monotony; he was a man of no learning, and had a special contempt for the poetry of Homer, on whom he wrote a parody; he also travestied the *Telemaque* of Fenelon. Besides these works, and his novels, he was the author of a number of dramatic pieces, which were very successful on the *Theatre Italien*, but have contributed little to the posthumous fame of their author.

No. 10.—p. 319.

#### ANTOINE PREVOT

WAS born at Hesdin, in Artois, in 1697. In his youth he twice entered the order of the Jesuits, which he twice quitted for a military life. Tired with dissipation, he became, after the accustomed noviciate, one of the Benedictines of St. Maur. But scarcely had he taken the triple and irrevocable vow of chastity, obedience, and poverty, than he repented of his choice, and, disgusted with the restraint of the monastic profession, escaped into England,

where he wrote some of his earliest works, and formed a tender connexion, which removed him still farther from the bosom of the church. By the mediation, however, of the Prince of Conti, he was permitted to return to France, and soon after became the secretary and grand almoner of his patron. In this situation he continued busily employed in the composition of numerous writings of all descriptions, till, having imprudently contributed to the periodical productions of a journalist, who indulged in rather free remarks on the government and religion of his country, he was banished to Brussels. He was soon, however, recalled to France, and entered anew on those immense literary pursuits, of which the fruits were the *Histoire General de Voyages*, the translations of Richardson's novels, &c. The year preceding his decease, he retired from Paris to a small house at St. Firmin, near Chantilly. His death happened in the neighbourhood of this retreat, in the shocking and unheard-of manner thus related by his biographer: "Comme il s'en retournoit seul a Saint-Firmin, le 23 Novembre, 1763, par le forêt de Chantilly, il fut frappé d'une apoplexie subite, et demeura sur la place. Des paysans qui survinrent par hazard, ayant apperçu son corps étendu au pied d'un arbre, le portèrent au curé du village le plus prochain. Le curé le fit déposer dans song église, en attendant la justice, qui fut appelée, comme c'est l'usage lorsqu'un cadavre a été trouvé. Elle se rassembla avec precipitation, et fit proceder sur le champ par le Chirurgien, a l'ouverture. Un cri du Malheureux, qui n'étoit pas mort, fit juger la verité a celui qui dirigeoit l'instrument, et glaça d'effroi les assistans. Le chirurgien s'arreta; il étoit trop tard, le coup porté étoit mortel. L'Abbé *Prevot* ne r'ouvrit les yeux que pour voir l'appareil cruel qui l'environnoit, et de quelle maniere horrible on lui arrachoit la vie."



## No. 11.—p. 343.

## MAD. D'AULNOY, MURAT, AND LA FORCE,

WERE the three principal writers of fairy tales in France. The first of these ladies was the daughter of M. Le Jumel de Barneville, a gentleman of one of the first families of Normandy, and was married to Francis, Count D'Aulnoy. To the advantages of noble birth and alliance, she united those of beauty and wit—she was distinguished for the elegance of her manners, and talents for conversation. Besides her celebrity as the author of fairy tales, she is also well known by her *Travels in Spain*.

Mad. Murat, daughter of the Marquis de Castelnau, and wife of the Count de Murat, was born in 1670. She is said to have been of a very lively and ardent disposition, and devoted to pleasure, which is indeed acknowledged in the species of confession which she has made in the *Memoires de sa Vie*, a work which is believed to have been written by herself. She had the misfortune to displease Mad. de Maintenon, who suspected her of having written a libel, in which the private court of Lewis XIV., towards the close of the seventeenth century, was grossly insulted, and she was in consequence banished to a distance from the capital. She was recalled, however, in 1715, by the regent duke of Orleans, at the intercession of Mad. de Parabere, her intimate friend. She did not, however, long enjoy the pleasure of again partaking in the amusements of the capital, as she died at Paris the year after her recall.

Mademoiselle de la Force was grand-daughter of Jaques de Caumont, subsequently Duc de la Force, whose escape from the massacre of St. Bartholomew has been celebrated in the *Henriade*, and who afterwards greatly signalized himself by his exploits, during the reigns of Henry IV. and Lewis XIII. His grand-daughter was united, in 1687, to Charles de Brion, but the marriage was declared null ten

days after its celebration. She survived this short union nearly forty years, during which she distinguished herself by various compositions, besides her *Contes de Fées*. Of these productions, her poetical epistle to Mad. de Maintenon, and her *Chateau en Espagne*, have been chiefly celebrated.

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